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EXPANDING THE MAGIC OF D&D

Dragon

ISSUE 338 · DECEMBER 2005

BOCCOB
GOD OF MAGIC
BY SEAN K REYNOLDS

WANDS UP, PENCILS DOWN
8 NEW WIZARD SCHOOLS

Imp Slap!
IMPS OF ILL-HUMOR

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Dragon

VOL. XXX NUMBER 7

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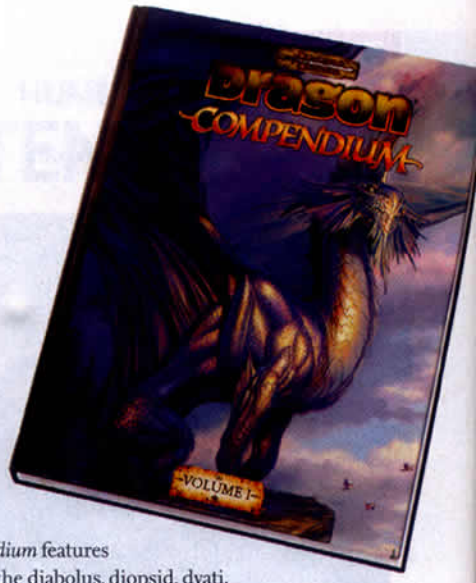
COMPILING THE COMPENDIUM



Years ago, the editors of *Dragon* used to compile the best articles from recent issues into special editions called the *Best of Dragon*. The practice ended in 1986 with the fifth volume in the series. Since then, excellent material from *Dragon*'s pages has come and gone, some sneaking its way into official D&D products and some slipping away into the bookshelf-bound obscurity of an old magazine collection.

In 2003, Paizo Publishing hit upon the idea of producing hardcover compilations of articles and adventures from the *Dragon* and *Dungeon* back catalogues, updated for play in the current edition of the D&D game. Our first hardcover, the *Shackled City Adventure Path*, was released in August to excellent reviews. But the second book was really the first one we had imagined, and initial work began on it more than two years ago.

In my original vision, the *Dragon Compendium* would be a hardcover version of the old *Best of Dragons*, compiling excellent articles from the magazine's 29-year history and updating them to the most recent version of the game.

As I combed through the archive, I began marking articles that caught my eye with colored post-it notes. It took weeks, but I finally made it through every single issue. By the time I was done, I not only had a better understanding of the magazine's history and how I might better edit the modern *Dragon*, but I also had dozens of hanging file folders stuffed with photocopies of every single article that had caught my eye on the first pass.

This spelled trouble, because there was just no way we could reprint all of the great material that had originally seen publication in the pages of *Dragon*. The monsters alone would have filled three 256-page books, and I only had one to work with. Clearly, the book couldn't be the definitive guide to the best material from *Dragon*, simply because no book could possibly hope to contain all of the great articles that have appeared in *Dragon*'s pages since the first issue launched back in June of 1976.

That's why we're calling this edition the *Dragon Compendium*, Volume 1. Our expectation is that the book's sales will justify further volumes in the series, so that we might do a book aimed at planar or "Oriental Adventures" material, and we might even do compilations of material germane to the official campaign settings. For this first installment, however, we've decided to aim at a general audience, providing top-quality material that will be useful to all players and Dungeon Masters.

So what made it into the book? This volume of the *Compendium* features five PC races (the diabolus, diopsid, dvati, lupin, and tibbit), seven standard classes (ranging from the battle dancer to the death master to the sha'ir), 10 prestige classes (including the arcanopath monk, the flux adept, and the osteomancer), and dozens of feats and magic items culled from the best *Dragon* articles in the magazine's history. But the *Compendium* is more than a simple collection of classes, spells, and magic items. It also features a lengthy chapter called "Classics," which reprints popular feature articles like "The Glyphs of Cerilon," from way back in issue #50, Ed Greenwood's "Runestones" article from Dragon #69, and Gary Jordan's infamous "Tesseracts (or, Making Meticulous Mappers Mad)," from issue #17. The articles in this section span three decades and three editions of the *Dungeons & Dragons* game, and represent a sample of the best *Dragon* has to offer.

Lastly, we round out the volume with more than two dozen monsters (including the orange, yellow, and purple dragons) and an appendix filled with lists of wondrous places, tests to determine the efficacy of your favorite dice, the famous "Good Hits and Bad Misses" critical hit and fumble charts, a pronunciation guide, and more.

Looking over the almost-final printouts, I'm not only amazed by how many great articles we managed to update and include, but I'm also stunned by how much amazing material remains to be culled for future volumes in what we hope will become a continuing series.

The *Dragon Compendium* is slated for release in late November. Ask your retailer to order it today or preorder a copy at **paizo.com**.

ERIK

Erik Mona
Editor-in-Chief

LETTERS

Tell us what you think of this issue. Send an email to **scalemail@paizo.com**. Please include your name, city, and state.

I'm Not Drunk Yet

DRAGON #334 was a great read, as it had some stuff that we had done before in our game (i.e., a kraken adventure). It was good to look over the article and see what things we did well, and what we could have done better.

I was particularly excited when I saw the catchphrase "Am I getting drunk yet?" on the cover. I thought to myself, finally some rules on what to do when your character gets drunk! What I found was very informative, and believe me the booze described within the article will add great depth to our game. But what about the negative effects of normal ale, wine, beer and liquor? Maybe there is somewhere you can direct me, or perhaps you could publish a table that shows it clearly, (or maybe you're not wanting to advocate heavy drinking in a gaming environment?).

Also, have you guys ever thought of putting in a crossword puzzle, or maybe star signs for characters? Just a thought.

Thanks for your great magazine.

Raymond Rowell
Sydney, Australia

DRAGON ran dozens of crossword puzzles in the magazine starting a little before the release of third edition and going several months into the new era, publishing them under the "mind flayers" heading. Check back issues from that period for a wealth of crosswords and other word puzzles. As for star signs, you'll want to be on board for the upcoming DRAGON #340, which will center around the theme of astrology and which is currently scheduled to feature an article on starsigns for player characters. How's that for quick service?

I asked around the office, and Associate Editor Jason Bulmahn suggested the following system to simulate the effects of drinking in D&D. Every alcoholic beverage has an associated Fortitude save DC. Beer or ale would be an easy 5, whereas elven wine might be 10, and the dwarven "special stuff" might clock in at a DC 15. Each subsequent drink raises the DC by 1, and the drinker must roll a save every time he drinks. Failure results in the character becoming sickened for 1d4 hours.

It's important to understand that the Paizo staff and Wizards of the Coast do not encourage excessive drinking in or out of the game, but since Jason is from Milwaukee, you can rest assured that his system has seen significant real-world "playtesting."

Dark Sun Monsters

Words cannot express how much I love your magazine! You really know what a gamer wants, especially a DM!

That being said...

In DRAGON #319, (the DARK SUN special), several of my favorite Athasian races were mentioned (beast-head giants, tareks, nikaals, ssurrans). I was wondering if the good people at Paizo were ever going to release official stats/info concerning these monsters.

Please write back!

Alex
Via Email

While we don't have any plans to feature the monsters listed above, fans of the much-loved, much-missed DARK SUN campaign setting will want to grab next month's "Campaign Classics" issue, which among other things will include an article featuring the Dragon Kings of Athas. If we receive lots of letters calling for more DARK SUN monsters (and DARK SUN coverage in general), we'll definitely keep the requests in mind for next year's "Campaign Classics" issue.

KNOWLEDGE CHECK

Question: What quintessential holiday movie features this beloved scene?

OGL

First off, I just have to say that you've done it again. DRAGON's October issues are, routinely, my favorite, and I've got a collection running back into the double digits to check through to confirm that. Issue #336 is no exception—the very first article, and I was hooked.

Speaking of that article, on the hauntings—how much of DRAGON is considered OGL now? Would "Not for the Living" be included? I remember the question being raised before, and the answer changing a few times, and I'm not entirely sure which it is anymore.

Congratulations on another great issue.

Jason Leisemann
Via Email

Unless otherwise noted, DRAGON contains no open content (which is to

say content subject to Wizards of the Coast's Open Game License). Our general philosophy (with a few exceptions) has been to let Wizards of the Coast decide what content they'd like to make "open" under the terms of the license. Since their hardcovers often incorporate material from DRAGON, *we've decided the ultimate decision should be up to them.*

FR Bias Unleashed

In the Scale Mail section of *Dragon* #336, I recently read another reader's suggestion that you should print one article for each currently supported setting per issue of *Dragon*. This would mean one Eberron, one Forgotten Realms, and one Greyhawk article per issue. Although this might be difficult to implement in each and every issue, I think it would be great if you would print 8 to 10 setting-specific articles (for each setting) per year.

Being a long-time Forgotten Realms fan, I am extremely biased toward reading about the Realms. That said, I have frequently cherry-picked various ideas, themes, and/or details from other campaign settings—typically, discovered in *Dragon* magazine itself—for use in my Forgotten Realms campaign. I do recognize, however, that there are other fans equally biased towards other settings. Therefore, why not satisfy us (the nameless masses) by sending us our monthly fix of Eberron, Forgotten Realms, and Greyhawk?

Just so you don't think I'm completely fixated on campaign settings, the "Ecology of..." and "Demonomicon" articles are cool; and by cool, I mean totally sweet.

By the way, the Realms content (i.e., Crimmor) in issue #334 rocked! Oh yeah, issue #335 was good too. Keep those Forgotten Realms... er, and Eberron and Greyhawk articles coming.

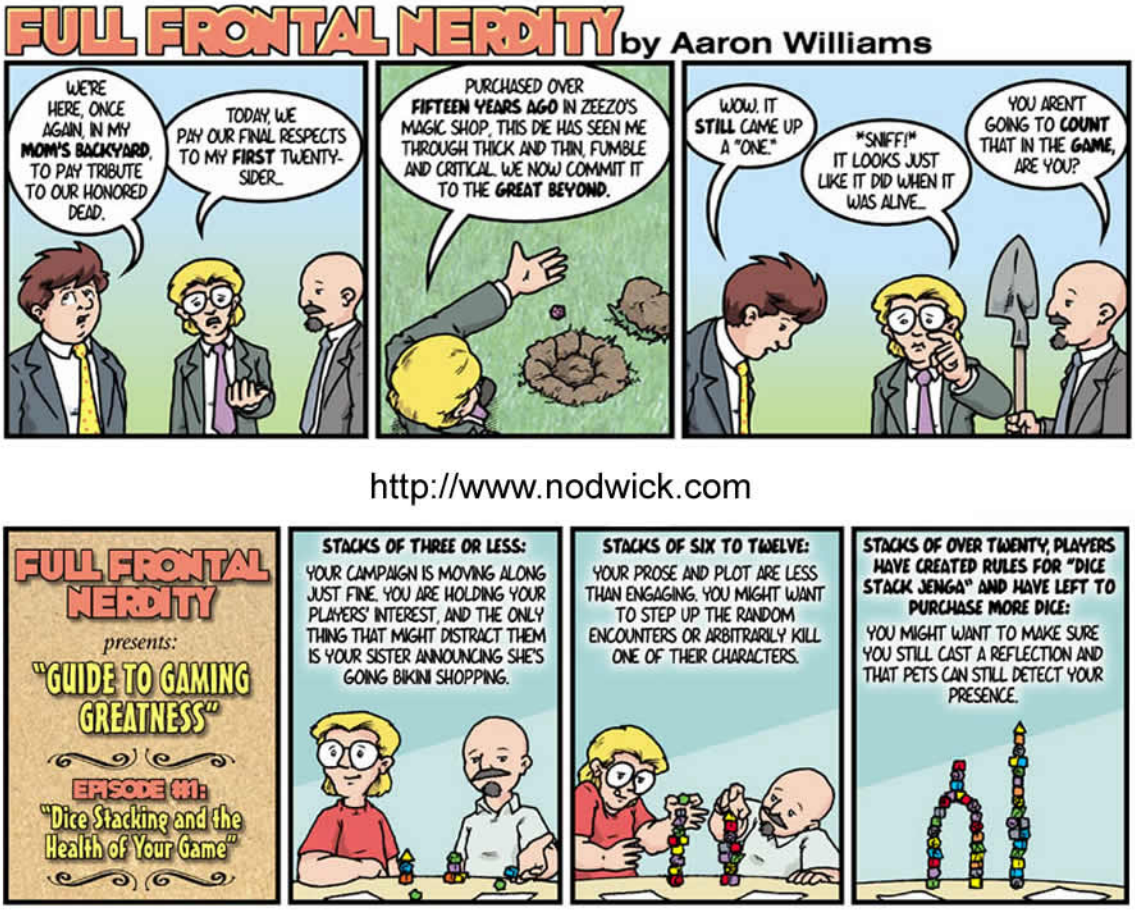
Laszlo Koller
Via Email

You Go 'Loths!

I love *Dragon*. It's helped me piece together so many things in the game I'm running to help make my game come to life (and I'm seriously considering buying *Dungeon* to see how good that is too).

As much as I consider myself one of the good guys, playing good characters, fighting evil with them and stuff like that, I have to admit that I have an extreme fascination with the evil side of the coin, the foes my characters could possibly face and so on. The "Demonomicon" articles in recent *Dragon* issues have fed that fascination a bit (and having a copy of *Book of Exalted Deeds* and its counterpart, *Book of Vile Darkness*, keeps me up to date on the arch-fiends).

My only aggravation is that, while there is a great deal of information on the demon princes and archdevils in the Lower Planes, there is a Very Substantial Vacuum. Where are the


FULL FRONTAL NERDITY by Aaron Williams
WE'RE HERE, ONCE AGAIN, IN MY MOM'S BACKYARD, TO PAY TRIBUTE TO OUR HONORED DEAD.
TODAY, WE PAY OUR FINAL RESPECTS TO MY FIRST TWENTY-SIDER.
PURCHASED OVER FIFTEEN YEARS AGO IN ZEEZO'S MAGIC SHOP, THIS DIE HAS SEEN ME THROUGH THICK AND THIN, FUMBLE AND CRITICAL. WE NOW COMMIT IT TO THE GREAT BEYOND.
WOW. IT STILL CAME UP A "ONE."
SNIFF! IT LOOKS JUST LIKE IT DID WHEN IT WAS ALIVE...
YOU AREN'T GOING TO COUNT THAT IN THE GAME, ARE YOU?
http://www.nodwick.com
FULL FRONTAL NERDITY
presents:
"GUIDE TO GAMING GREATNESS"
EPISODE #1:
"Dice Stacking and the Health of Your Game"
STACKS OF THREE OR LESS:
YOUR CAMPAIGN IS MOVING ALONG JUST FINE. YOU ARE HOLDING YOUR PLAYERS' INTEREST, AND THE ONLY THING THAT MIGHT DISTRACT THEM IS YOUR SISTER ANNOUNCING SHE'S GOING BIKINI SHOPPING.
STACKS OF SIX TO TWELVE:
YOUR PROSE AND PLOT ARE LESS THAN ENGAGING. YOU MIGHT WANT TO STEP UP THE RANDOM ENCOUNTERS OR ARBITRARILY KILL ONE OF THEIR CHARACTERS.
STACKS OF OVER TWENTY, PLAYERS HAVE CREATED RULES FOR "DICE STACK JENGA" AND HAVE LEFT TO PURCHASE MORE DICE:
YOU MIGHT WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU STILL CAST A REFLECTION AND THAT PETS CAN STILL DETECT YOUR PRESENCE.

GAMER GIFTS

Dragon Talk

For its third year, gamer-driven webcomic Penny Arcade (**penny-arcade.com**) is organizing "Child's Play," a gamer-driven charity for Children's Hospitals across the United States. In just two years of operation gamers of all stripes have donated more than $500,000 of toys and video games for the benefit of sick kids.

In addition to distributing games this year's drive will fund a Johns Hopkins study called Project HOPE, which connects chronically ill kids via Xbox Live—early results show that kids who game during painful treatments require less painkillers. The success of Child's Play is due in part to its simplicity: to donate, just go to **childsplaycharity.org** and click on the hospital nearest you. You'll be taken to an **amazon.com** wishlist; buy a toy and it'll be sent directly to the hospital. Gamers helping gamers, that's what it's all about. Happy holidays! *–Mike Fehlauer*

archfiends of the yugoloths? Who are the big cheeses running the show on the neutral evil outsider turf? The good guys have their neutral good arch-celestials (like Talasid). Why shouldn't the yugoloths have their bosses? In fact, there's a surprising shortage on the nature of yugoloths in general. It's pretty well known by now what demons and devils do in their spare time and how their hierarchies work. But all we know about yugoloths is "they commit evil without the bias of Chaos or Order." If you can help fuel this curiosity, it would be greatly appreciated.

Matthew Mayberry
Via Email

You know what? You're right. There isn't enough information about the yugoloths in the current edition of Dungeons & Dragons, *and we may very well be covering them some time in the future. As for their leaders, you may want to consult page 109 of the* Manual of the Planes, *which discusses the Khin-Oin, a massive tower that houses the nominal ruler of the yugoloths, a being called the Oinoloth. The current Oinoloth is a (one assumes advanced) ultraloth named Mydianchlarus, who presumably deposed the former ruler, a being known as Anthraxus the Decayed. Anthraxus dates back to the first edition* Monster Manual II, *which also discloses the names of several prominent yugoloths (then called daemons): Bubonis, Cholerix, Typhus, and Diptherius. Other "unique" yugoloths akin to demon lords or archdevils presumably exist.*

Most of the relevant lore published about yugoloths to date can be found in the second edition Planescape *campaign setting, notably in the products* Faces of Evil: The Fiends *and the* Hellbound *boxed set. Both of these products are long out of print, so you'll have to do some digging to find them. I do recommend the search, and I think you'll be pleased by what you find. In the meantime, please consider the magazine open to proposals about the yugoloths and their inscrutable machinations.—Erik Mona*

KNOWLEDGE CHECK ANSWER

Answer: *Gremlins*, of course! What could be more festive than a movie about receiving a gift that just keeps on giving? Happy holidays from the entire *Dragon* staff!

Chaos Wasteland
http://chaos-wasteland.dyndns.org:6969/
RPG BIT-TORRENT TRACKER

SCAN REQUESTS

Official D&D
- Heroes of Horror
- Hellspike Prison
- Spell Compendium
- Dungeon Magazine #126

d20 Sword & Sorcery
- Advanced Player's Guide

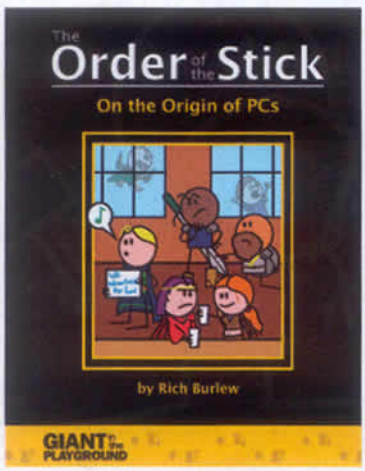
d20 Sovereign Press
- Towers of High Sorcery
- War of the Lance
- Holy Orders of the Stars
- Legends of the Twins
- Spectre of Sorrows

NEW RELEASES

Finally, spellcasters can stop hauling such heavy loads on game day. All they need now is the *Player's Handbook* and the *Spell Compendium*, Wizards of the Coast's first compilation volume of 3.5 edition spells. Authors Matthew Sernett, Jeff Grubb, and DRAGON's own Mike McArtor culled these spells from DRAGON issues #274 to #327 as well as from Wizards of the Coast books like the Complete series. Included among the hundreds of spells are visual descriptions of each spell, a master spell list for clerics and druids, a collection of domains, and comprehensive notations directing you toward all the original source material. Now get casting! –*S.B.*

13
Tiamat
Evil Dragon God
Dragon God—Tiamat counts as a Black, Blue, Green, Red, and White Dragon. As long as you have Tiamat and a good dragon in your flight, you can't win the gambit.
13

Your party desperately needs to spend time recovering hit points and gathering information at the local inn, but why not have fun while you're at it? Featuring 72 cards emblazoned with iconic classes and famous dragons from DUNGEONS & DRAGONS lore—including all your favorite colors and Tiamat, Queen of Evil Dragons—*Three-Dragon Ante* is a non-collectible card game from Wizards of the Coast (**wizards.com**) designed to add flavor to even the dullest stakeouts or barroom binges. Play it in character as part of a crucial encounter, by itself when you don't have time for a full game, or just use it as an amazing player handout! –*J.S.*



Since 2003, Rich Burlew's *Order of the Stick webcomic* (**giantitp.com**) has been lampooning DUNGEONS & DRAGONS to the delight of legions of fans, foregoing the usual gamer-as-nerd slams in favor of exposing D&D's innate in-game humor ("Wait everybody—I think I just failed my Spot check"). Now, after years of hilarity, *Order of the Stick* is finally coming to the pages of DRAGON with all-new comics beginning this month. In addition, Paizo Publishing has enlisted as *Order of the Stick's* official publisher, and both strip collections (*Dungeon Crawlin' Fools* and *On the Origin of the PCs*) are now available through **paizo.com**. –*J.S.*

NEXT MONTH IN DRAGON # 339

CLASSIC CREATURES
by Sean K Reynolds
From the animus to the xvart, sixteen of GRAYHAWK, MYSTARA, and RAVENLOFT's deadliest denizens return to menace your campaign.

RACES OF SPELLJAMMER
by Joshua Cole
The stoic giff, insidious insectare, and piratical scro take to the stars again!

DEAD FACTIONS
by Monte Lin
The Mercykillers, the Sign of One, and more of PLANESCAPE's forgotten factions reclaim Sigil's streets.

DRAGON KINGS
by Chris Flipse and Jon Sederqvist
Defile the land and raise your own empire as one of DARK SUN's godlike dragon kings. The first in DRAGON's new Year of Dragons anniversary series.

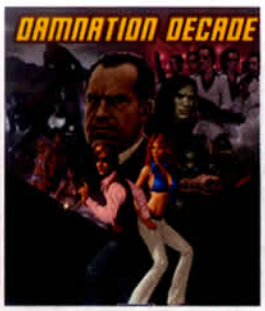
PLUS!
The Ecology of the Draconian, Spellcraft: MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH, a new look for Class Acts, and comics, including The Order of the Stick.

D&D ONLINE

Early next year, Wizards of the Coast and Turbine Entertainment Software add DUNGEONS & DRAGONS to the ranks of massively multiplayer online roleplaying games with *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Online*. Explore EBERRON's jungle continent of Xen'drik, delve into ancient dungeons, fight iconic D&D monsters, and play with your friends online, all from your home computer. In the coming months First Watch will provide you with an exclusive look at *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Online*, leading up to its release in late February. For more information, check out **ddo.com** and these pages next month for an in-depth sneak peak. –*W.S.*

GREMLINS, START YOUR ENGINES

Fight to the finish line with Arthaus Publishing and Sword and Sorcery Studios' *Racer Knights of Falconus*, a new "constructible card game" that combines demolition derby action with a fantasy setting. Each pack contains rules, dice, and all the plastic cardstock pieces you need to forge your dragon-fueled racer. Compete against wily gremlins, spell-charged wizards, hulking ogres, reptilian serpids, and other competitors, then collect and trade pieces to seek out the parts and drivers that will lead you to glory. Learn more at **racerknights.com**. –*M.L.F.*



OVER THE EDGE, DARKLY

The dystopian future of the 1970s comes to life in *Damnation Decade*, Green Ronin's latest entry in their Mythic Vistas series. Inspired by a variety of dark futures, like those of *A Clockwork Orange*, *Logan's Run*, *Mad Max*, and *Soylent Green*, *Damnation Decade* portrays a world out of oil where corporate aliens control the government while global warming and acid rain poison the planet (hey wait, isn't that today?). A 160-page softcover, *Damnation Decade* is compatible with both d20 MODERN and Green Ronin's *True20 System*. Find out more at **greenronin.com**. –*A.G.*

COME ON INN

Need a place to start your next adventure or collect a little information? Stop on by the Crystal Caste Inn (**crystalcaste.com**), a painstakingly crafted and fully painted set piece designed for use with D&D-sized miniatures. Unlike many commercial props, the Crystal Caste Inn is built to scale down to the smallest detail—windows and railings even hit miniatures exactly where they would in real life. Moving doors and gates facilitate dynamic gameplay, the detailed courtyard, well, and stable out back add loads of character, and a removable roof reveals an interior ready for your next bar brawl. –*J.S.*

FLIGHTS OF FANTASY

Fantasy Flight's new Winter lineup begins with updates of two classic board games: In *Britannia*, players battle each other in conquest of ancient Britain, while the reimagined *Fury of Dracula* features a gothic foe, as players strive to bring an end to Dracula's reign of terror. Then there's *World of Warcraft*, a tabletop version of Blizzard's popular online RPG in which players build skills, collect artifacts, and smite their enemies. Also, don't miss *The Lord of the Rings: The Confrontation* Deluxe Edition, featuring a larger gameboard and 18 new characters, or the new *Runebound* expansions: *The Island of Dread* and *Midnight*, the first full-size expansions for the popular fantasy board game. It's a lot, but it all releases this month, just in time for the holidays! Find out about it all at **fantasyflightgames.com**. –*M.L.F.*

NATURAL 20

Ever innovating new and exciting gaming experiences, Green Ronin Publishing presents *True20 Adventure Roleplaying*. Founder Chris Pramas explains the system, which first released as part of their *Blue Rose* game, "The idea was to take the d20 rules and strip them down to make them easier to learn... It was named True20 to reflect the fact that you only need a d20 to play." In the hopes of finding the next great fantasy world, Green Ronin conducted a open call for setting submissions. In February—check these pages for the first announcement of that search's results. You can also check out an advance PDF of the True20 rules at **rpgnow.com.** –*W.S.*

SMAUG, MOVE OVER

New this month, *McFarlane's Dragons 2* series showcases a unique collection of six new draconic menaces, each detailed in vivid, hand-painted colors. The collection consists of five stand-alone dragons and *The Eternal Dragon Clan 2* deluxe boxed set, featuring a mounted rider locked in battle against a dragon in flight. Also available now is the Eternal Clan Dragon Limited Edition, a new version of an original *McFarlane's Dragons* statuette, depicting an avianlike dragon and rider perched atop a crushed tower roof. Check out this entirely new flight of dragons and far more at **spawn.com.** –*A.G.*

ENTER OBLIVION

The king is dead, the gates of Hell stand open, and only you can find the heir to the throne and save the land. Enter the world of the *Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion*—the sequel to the award-winning *Morrowind*. The designers at Bethesda promise a combination of free-form gameplay, cutting-edge graphics, and an improved combat and magic system. Available now for both the Xbox 360 and the PC, *Oblivion* offers customizable characters, improved AI, and more of the vastly interactive environments fans of the series have come to love. Learn more about the entire Elder Scrolls series at **bethsoft.com.** –*M.L.F.*

GOBLIN FOOD

Leave that old Crown Royal bag at home and get your dice a goblin. A Dice Goblin, that is. These durable drawstring dice bags, measuring roughly 7.5" by 5.5", are designed to look just like a furry little goblin, each ready to guard your luckiest dice. Handcrafted with a black satin liner for strength, every one has its own unique design. That's right—no two Dice Goblins are exactly alike, so it's first come, first served. You can even design your own, customizing your dice goblin with the exact colors, features, and all the eyes, horns, and tentacles you've ever wanted. Pick up yours today at **dicegoblins.com.** –*M.L.F.*

DUNGEON THIS MONTH # 129

MURDER IN OAKBRIDGE

by Uri Kurlianchik

The PCs match wits with an assassin driven insane by the accidental death of her daughter. An EBERRON murder mystery for 5th-level characters.

GATHERING OF WINDS

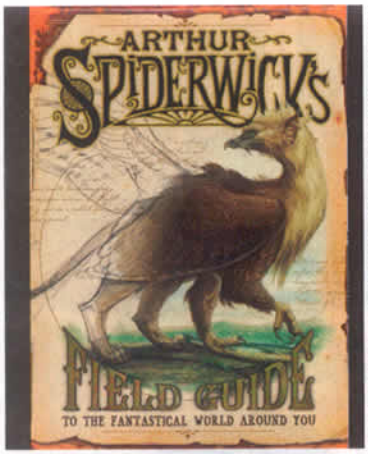
by Wolfgang Baur

The PCs return to Diamond Lake only to find the place in shambles after a visit from the black dragon Ilthane. The sage Allustan is missing and tracking him leads to an active gate within the Whispering Cairn. Can the PCs survive the fully-active true tomb of Icosiol, General of the Wind Dukes of Aaqa? An Age of Worms Adventure Path scenario for 11th-level characters.

THE TWISTED RUN

by Wil Upchurch

With the unification of the North, the Beastlord Malar could no longer watch as his wilderness was slowly civilized. Now the god's chosen follower wreaks a crusade of devastation and chaos upon all who defile the wilderness. A FORGOTTEN REALMS adventure for 17th-level characters.



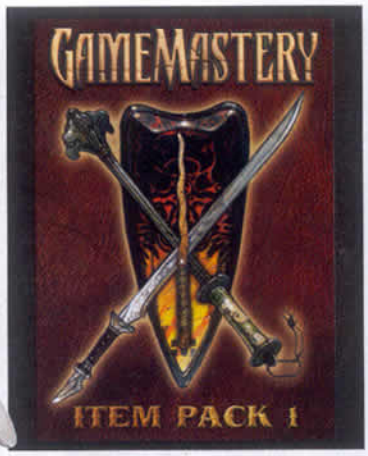
FIELD REPORT

Every student of the fantastic should sneak a peek at the new *Arthur Spiderwick's Field Guide*. Using an Audubon-style approach, illustrator Tony DiTerlizzi sketched creatures found in he and Holly Black's New York Times bestselling serial, *The Spiderwick Chronicles*. Covering boggarts, phookas, nixies, dragons, treefolk, and more, DiTerlizzi says, "It's like the *Monster Manual* for the mainstream public!" Co-author Holly Black echoes this naturalism in her detailed descriptions of the creatures and their environs, revealing some of the original folklore and mythology of each. To learn more about the world of Spiderwick, check out DRAGON #331 or **spiderwick.com**. –*S.B.*

COMPLETE 360

This month sees the release of the first of the next generation game systems, the graphically advanced Xbox 360. With built-in online capabilities and an optional hard drive, the 360 promises a whole new range of gaming experiences.

Put your shiny new 360's graphical muscles to work with *Kameo: Elements of Power*. This innovative adventure might best be described as a druid's fantasy as you shapeshift into a variety of creatures (yeti, faerie, dragon, pugilistic plant) to overcome obstacles and take on thousands of enemies. Other upcoming fantasy and sci-fi titles for the 360 include: *The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion*, *King Kong*, and *Too Human*, among others. For more information check out **xbox.com**. –M.F.



ITEM CREATION FEAT

How many times have your players forgotten about a potion until it was too late? Paizo Publishing's new *GameMastery Item Packs* make keeping track of magical loot easier than ever. Covering the basics from weapons to rings, every pack features fifty-six, full-color item cards, each illustrated by Vincent Dutrait and with brief descriptions of a specific treasure. There's even room for DMs to write in their own customized information or for players to take notes, making every item unique. With color-coding for each type of item and numbers for easy indexing, Paizo's *Item Packs* make handing out and organizing treasure smoother and more satisfying than ever before. Order yours at **paizo.com**. –*J.S.*

RPGA REPORT *by Ian Richards*

Wow, how fast a year goes by! Here we are again with WINTER FANTASY right ahead of us. Before I start rambling on about WINTER FANTASY 2006, let's look back a little.

This year we saw the largest attendance for our summer shows ever. We planned for more and we sure were not dissipointed! To give you an idea, in 1999 the RPGA had a little over 1,000 events globally. Five years later we had more than 14,000 reported events, with the biggest growth in the last three years. This year we bypassed that number in October with the final total still to be counted. This growth has a lot to do with us moving back into stores with a robust support plan, plus opening up home play so GMs and stores can offer regular D&D experiences.

As for what's on the horizon, the RPGA's own show, WINTER FANTASY, returns to the D.C. area in 2006. With the success of WINTER FANTASY 2005 we figured we could hardly move!

Besides the usual discussions and big announcements, this year we'll be seeing more special events for the leading campaigns, plus an increased amount of *D&D Miniatures* play, including a special constructed tournament with a booster case of our very first set, *Harbinger*, as the prize!

WINTER FANTASY 2006 is being held at the Crystal City Hyatt, located at 2799 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, VA 22202. Those planning to attend can receive a discount by calling the Hyatt hotel at 703-418-1234 and telling them you are attending Wizards of the Coast WINTER FANTASY 2006. Details of all the events, how to get tickets, and how to volunteer can be found at **rpga.com**.

SCHOOLS OF MAGIC

BY ALFRED O. CLOUTIER
illustrated by David Hudnut

Deep mazes stretching hundreds of layers below the earth, floating arks the size of small islands, salty marshes teeming with both natural and aberrant life forms—these are all places wizards go to learn their powerful arts. These institutions do not adhere strictly to the curriculum of the "classical" schools of magic: abjuration, conjuration, divination, enchantment, evocation, illusion, necromancy, and transmutation. There are historical and philosophical reasons these schools teach the spells they do, and they do not always fit the classical categories perfectly.

For the purposes of this article, the original schools of magic listed in the *Player's Handbook* are referred to as the "classical" schools of magic and the new schools presented here are referred to as "philosophical" schools of magic.

A character taught at one of the following philosophical schools specializes in the spells taught at that school, foregoing the ability to specialize in a classical school. In effect, a wizard who attends one of these schools benefits from an assortment of spells from different classic spell schools.

A 1st-level wizard, specializing in a philosophical school of magic, is considered to have gone through the initiation process, attended the philosophical school for a certain period of time—usually more than a year—and graduated from that school. Such students must still meet any prerequisites the school requires.

A character beyond 1st level who wishes to attend one of these philosophical schools must first find the location of the school and attempt to become a student. If the prospective student is allowed to attend, the effects of philosophical school specialization take place as soon as the character gains a level of wizard. Those with pre-existing levels of wizard gain no benefit from attending a philosophical school.

A wizard specialized in a philosophical school of magic chooses his bonus spells from the spell list included with the description of that school. If the wizard learns the spell from the school itself (i.e., the wizard goes back to the school to learn the bonus spell), he gains a +3 bonus on his Spellcraft check to learn that spell; otherwise he gains a +1 bonus to learn that spell. Wizards studying at a philosophical school must neglect one specific school of magic in preference to those taught at the institution. This neglected school becomes his prohibited school.

Presented here are sample philosophical schools of magic, including the location, motto, description of each school, curriculum, and choices of prohibited school.

THE DRADENCH ACADEMIES

Dear father, you were right. Training to be a war wizard is hard work. Two hours of combat practice, three hours of spellcasting on the battlefield, and one hour training in military etiquette; all of this before lunch and without a single moment's rest.

Location: Six locations across several nations.

Motto: "Maexer" (Victory)

Curriculum: War and combat magic.

History/Description: Macreous Dradench was an ambitious lord in a war-torn age. Through countless campaigns he came to understand the advantage of having novice wizards scattered throughout his military forces, and in response, he built a chain of wizard schools across his territories. Over time, however, these schools were destroyed or fell into other hands. Although these academies are now in different countries and serve different nations, they retain the Dradench name and curriculum.

A wizard who applies to one of the Dradench Academies must be proficient with one martial weapon and possess a proven record as a war wizard apprentice (i.e., he must have a professional military reference speak on his behalf).

The Dradench Academies are rigorous and very disciplined—even more so than other wizard schools. Wizards at a Dradench Academy are expected to learn a very narrow curriculum of spells in a short time, with few errors.

In times of war, the schools relax their admission policies (allowing those without references to attend) and turn out undergraduate fighting wizards at an accelerated rate.

CURRICULUM

The following spells are taught at the Dradench Academies.

0—*ray of frost*
1st—*burning hands, chill touch*
2nd—*bull's strength, flaming sphere*
3rd—*fireball, flame arrow, lightning bolt*
4th—*stoneskin*
5th—*cone of cold*
6th—*mass bull's strength, chain lightning, Otiluke's freezing sphere*
7th—*delayed blast fireball, finger of death*
8th—*horrid wilting*
9th—*meteor swarm*

PROHIBITED SCHOOLS

Wizards schooled at the Dradench Academies must choose either conjuration or illusion as their prohibited school.

EYERLIN'S HARVESTERS

Today, my young harvesters, we shall delve again into the realm of decay. Our specimens are shocker lizards, allowed to rot in the festering pool for one month. See how the form is bloated and its scales have begun to slip from its flesh, but pay close attention to the life that has sprung from death.

Location: Any swamp environment.

Motto/Creed: "Viliovrab Vreach" (Life Envelops All)

Curriculum: Organic manipulation.

History/Description: Eyerlin's Harvesters are wizards who learn, hands-on, the mysteries of life in the biological muck of the Prodrotic Hatcheries, forlorn cave complexes located in the depths of a fetid salt marsh. The caves' perforated stone ceilings open to the sky, with numerous passages leading to deep anaerobic chambers below the gurgling waters of the surface marsh. These numerous environments allow a wide variety of plants and animals to flourish.

In order to maintain the balance of life in the Prodrotic Hatcheries, a cadre of mystics established a school. The college has no campus or buildings other than a few huts and some caves, but the teachers and students live well off the bounty of the land.

The teachers at Eyerlin's each take three pupils, called "harvesters," who are initiated when the previous students graduate. The initiation process involves the contraction of two diseases simultaneously (no initial saving throw): the red ache and the shakes, which the applicant must survive by nonmagical means in order to gain admittance to the school. These are particularly deadly strains of both diseases and the Fortitude saving throws to recover from them are made at –2 penalties. The applicant must recover from each disease separately, but may have one friend act as a healer.

CURRICULUM

The following spells are taught by Eyerlin's Harvesters.

0—*acid splash, resistance*
1st—*enlarge person, reduce person*
2nd—*summon swarm, web*
3rd—*gentle repose, stinking cloud*
4th—*contagion, Evard's black tentacles*
5th—*animal growth, blight*
6th—*circle of death*
7th—*finger of death, summon monster VII, waves of exhaustion*
8th—*horrid wilting*
9th—*energy drain, freedom, imprisonment*

PROHIBITED SCHOOLS

Wizards who learn magic from Eyerlin's Harvesters must choose either enchantment or evocation as their prohibited school.

GELETRODE MULTIVERSITY

Geletrode has a long history of providing the finest arcane education available to aspiring wizards. Students at the Geletrode Multiversity study a number of diverse topics, from the theory of magic to practical application.

Location: Any city.

Motto: "Tastect" (Utility)

Curriculum: Overall mix of spells.

History/Description: Gellen Aqedoer Geletrode, a wise and powerful human wizard, founded Geletrode Multiversity. Settling in a large city, the wizard tamed the nearby gnoll hordes that plagued the area and was generally considered a great ally to the community. As the city grew large and powerful with Geletrode's assistance, so did the Multiversity. Today, long after the founder's passing, the multiversity still boasts an active campus with hundreds of students, teachers, and administrators.

The teachers at Geletrode teach varied spells of utility. Most consider a Geletrode education to be the most well-rounded and useful curriculum any historical school provides, and many Geletrode graduates have gone on to distinguished careers as advisors and rulers.

Applicants to the Multiversity must take tests designed to measure their logical and spellcasting abilities. Applicants are then interviewed, and their parents or sponsors are required to pay a 500 gp tuition fee.

The admission process for new characters is part of that character's background. Characters beyond 1st-level must succeed at a DC 18 Intelligence check to pass the tests, then a DC 12 Charisma check to impress the interviewers. Failing those, the applicant can still pay 5,000 gp to bypass the test and interview requirements. A wizard who succeeds the test and interview must still pay the 500 gp tuition to gain admission.

CURRICULUM

The following spells are taught at the Geletode Multiversity.

0—*light*
1st—*identify, Tenser's floating disk, unseen servant*
2nd—*fox's cunning, locate object*
3rd—*dispel magic, fly*
4th—*Rary's mnemonic enhancer, remove curse*
5th—*break enchantment, fabricate*
6th—*greater dispel magic, Mordenkainen's lucubration*
7th—*greater arcane sight, Drawmij's instant summons*
8th—*polymorph any object*
9th—*etherealness, freedom, Mordenkainen's disjunction*

PROHIBITED SCHOOLS

Wizards schooled at the Geletrode Multiversity must choose either illusion or necromancy as their prohibited school.

THE KIRDKRANE HAUNT

There is no mirth in these halls, for the dead patrol them. The ghosts teach not only secrets of magic but of the grave as well, knowing that one day, every student will join them in their endless search.

Location: Any lonely wilderness.

Motto: "Krinor dal Seskant" (Death is the Door)

Curriculum: Enchantment and deception.

History/Description: The Kirdkrane Haunt graduates some of the most cunning and powerful wizards in the world. Residing in an old lofty citadel overlooking a slow, fog-shrouded river, the school was once home to a cadre of powerful spellcasters. Ages ago, an unspoken catastrophe struck the place and all those inside were slain, later arising as ghosts.

The Haunt is run by a number of these ghosts, who teach daily lessons and administer discipline. Other ghosts roam the grounds in search of something long forgotten or on errands that can never be finished. Those learning from the ghosts that inhabit the citadel for the entire length of their studies.

A wizard who wishes to enter the school after 1st level must simply pass through the front doors of the school. Anyone approaching these iron doors is subject to a *charm person* (DC 15) and *suggestion* spell (DC 17), which attempt to convince the prospective student that, in order to gain admittance, a great monster must be defeated, that the applicant is in the wrong place, or otherwise mislead him away from the school. The doors cast these spells as a 6th-level sorcerer and are artifacts that cannot be destroyed by mortal means. Those who succeed at both saves gain entrance to the keep and can begin their studies immediately.

CURRICULUM

The following spells are taught by the ghosts of the Kirdkrane Haunt.

0—*daze, touch of fatigue*
1st—*cause fear, charm person*
2nd—*blindness/deafness, daze monster*
3rd—*deep slumber, hold person*
4th—*bestow curse, lesser geas*
5th—*dominate person, magic jar*
6th—*geas/quest, mass suggestion*
7th—*insanity, power word blind*
8th—*symbol of death, symbol of insanity*
9th—*dominate monster, energy drain*

PROHIBITED SCHOOLS

Wizards schooled at the Kirdkrane Haunt must choose either evocation or transmutation as their prohibited school.

THE KLUCID MASTERS

There is no place the masters cannot take me and no knowledge they cannot teach me. I have traveled farther than anyone and seen all the wonders this world has to offer. Now it is time to move on to others.

Location: Any body of water.

Motto: "Teitloeb er Drosua En-Plusens" (Where the Water Takes Us)

Curriculum: Illusions and knowledge.

History/Description: The home of the Klucid Masters is built on a small floating island, the petrified remains of some titanic creature. A powerful wizard called Naenjio is credited with slaying the creature and creating the unsinkable ark, now called Naenjio's Husk. Appearing in all the major bodies of water in the world, the Husk stays in one place for a few days, weeks, or even months at a time, then simply vanishes, reappearing in a new body of water instantaneously. Up to this point, the Husk has never been seen in the same body of water twice.

The Klucid Masters are a group of five wizards who control the navigation of Naenjio's Husk, traveling the world's seas and oceans studying the nature of magic. Aloof and fickle, the masters do not seek students for training, but occasionally teach eager stowaways on Naenjio's Husk. The Masters, however, do not take kindly to disruptive behavior and, as such, the bones of many unruly students rest at the bottoms of the world's oceans.

A character wishing to learn from the Klucid Masters must first find Naenjio's Husk and then find one of the Masters. To convince a Master to teach, a wizard must succeed at a DC 15 Charisma check followed by a DC 15 Spellcraft check. Failing either of these checks means the Master is unimpressed and ignores the prospective student. The student must then search the Husk to find another Master and repeat the process. If a student fails to impress any of the Masters he is ejected from the Husk, teleported to a random location within 1,000 miles (50% chance of being teleported underwater).

CURRICULUM

The following spells are taught by the Klucid Masters.

0—*detect magic, ghost sound, read magic*
1st—*comprehend languages, silent image*
2nd—*detect thoughts, mirror image*
3rd—*major image, tongues*
4th—*arcane eye, hallucinatory terrain*
5th—*contact other plane, mirage arcane*
6th—*mislead, true seeing*
7th—*greater arcane sight, project image*
8th—*greater prying eyes, scintillating pattern*
9th—*foresight, weird*

PROHIBITED SCHOOLS

Wizards who study with the Klucid Masters must choose either enchantment or necromancy as their prohibited school.

THE LABYRINTH OF MARBDABDI AND THE MAZES OF LOET-RAB

Day 14. I have only four days left to find my way out of this level of the maze with a passing grade. Of course, the one-way chute that led back to the beginning did not help any. If only I had remembered to bring that scroll of detect secret doors!

Location: Any mountainous area.

Motto/Creed: "Milin in Tallus en Pallus" (For Every Wall a Way)

Curriculum: Walls, barriers, freedom of passage, and stonemasonry.

History/Description: The Labyrinth and Mazes were founded by dwarven wizards, who built a massive above-ground labyrinth and layers of mazes reaching up to a mile underground. Although the land above is a rocky wasteland, it is a major waypoint in the Underdark below.

Dwarven tunnelers and stonemasons train in the Labyrinth aboveground, while the wizards train below, in the Mazes of Loet-rab. Loet-rab is the name of the titanic column of stone that extends below the Labyrinth. Students graduate by creating a "masterwork" maze one level deeper than the previous mazes in the column. Usually, an entire graduating class works together to create one of these layers, each designing and building a small section.

Admission to the Loet-rab school includes the creation of a *dorodango*, a perfectly spherical ball made of mud and earth with a complex maze scribed into its surface. To make an acceptable dorodango, an applicant must succeed at a DC 13 Craft (stoneworking) check and a DC 20 Intelligence check. Failing either means that the dorodango is imperfect or too simple to solve.

CURRICULUM

The following spells are taught in the Mazes of Loet-Rab.

0—*mending, open/close*
1st—*detect secret doors, reduce person*
2nd—*knock, spider climb*
3rd—*Leomund's tiny hut, wind wall*
4th—*dimension door, wall of fire, wall of ice*
5th—*teleport, wall of force, wall of stone*
6th—*move earth, wall of iron*
7th—*phase door, greater teleport*
8th—*maze*
9th—*teleportation circle*

PROHIBITED SCHOOLS

Wizards schooled in the Mazes of Loet-Rab must choose either enchantment or necromancy as their prohibited school.

THE PILOPRAPTIS SCHOOL

The professors speak of the future as the past, always preparing us for a time when our skills will be needed. Although they do not speak of it, something terrible is coming and we are not yet ready.

Location: Any land that can be reached by the mountain.

Motto: "Trunarta Exalgia Soropins" (Beyond the Eye is Truth)

Curriculum: Transformation of self.

History/Description: The Pilopraptis School is a relic of a very intelligent and powerful race able to travel through time. Presumably this fortress was the time machine itself, but any magical or technological function it once had is now lost deep within its fused and superheated core. The fortress is called Pilopraptis, and it is a great black mound of charred alloys nearly the size of a mountain. At the base of Pilopraptis is a steaming lagoon of melted rock and soil. Pilopraptis moves slowly through this lagoon, melting the earth as it moves and leaving a trail of smooth igneous rock, like a great, molten slug trail.

The dormitories and classrooms of the wizard school cluster near Pilopraptis' peak, protected from the noxious vapors wafting up from the melting matter at the base of the mountain. The teachers and administrators of the school generally accept any student hardy enough to make it to the top of Pilopraptis.

The teachers in Pilopraptis are all constructs, relics of the race who built the fortress. Some speculat that the constructs were originally created to teach the children of the builders of Pilopraptis. Keener minds postulate that the time travelers placed these constructs here to teach magic to humans and others in order to affect the future.

Prospective students attempting to enter the school must find a way to the gates at the top of the fortress. Once there, an applicant must knock at the gates and await entrance. If an applicant has climbed the fortress from the ground (not flown or teleported to the top) and suffered the heat and smoke effects already, the gates open in 1d4 rounds. If the wizard applicant flies or is teleported to the top of Pilopraptis, she is required to wait for 1d4+10 rounds. Any being outside the gates atop Pilopraptis is assumed to be breathing heavy smoke (see *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 304).

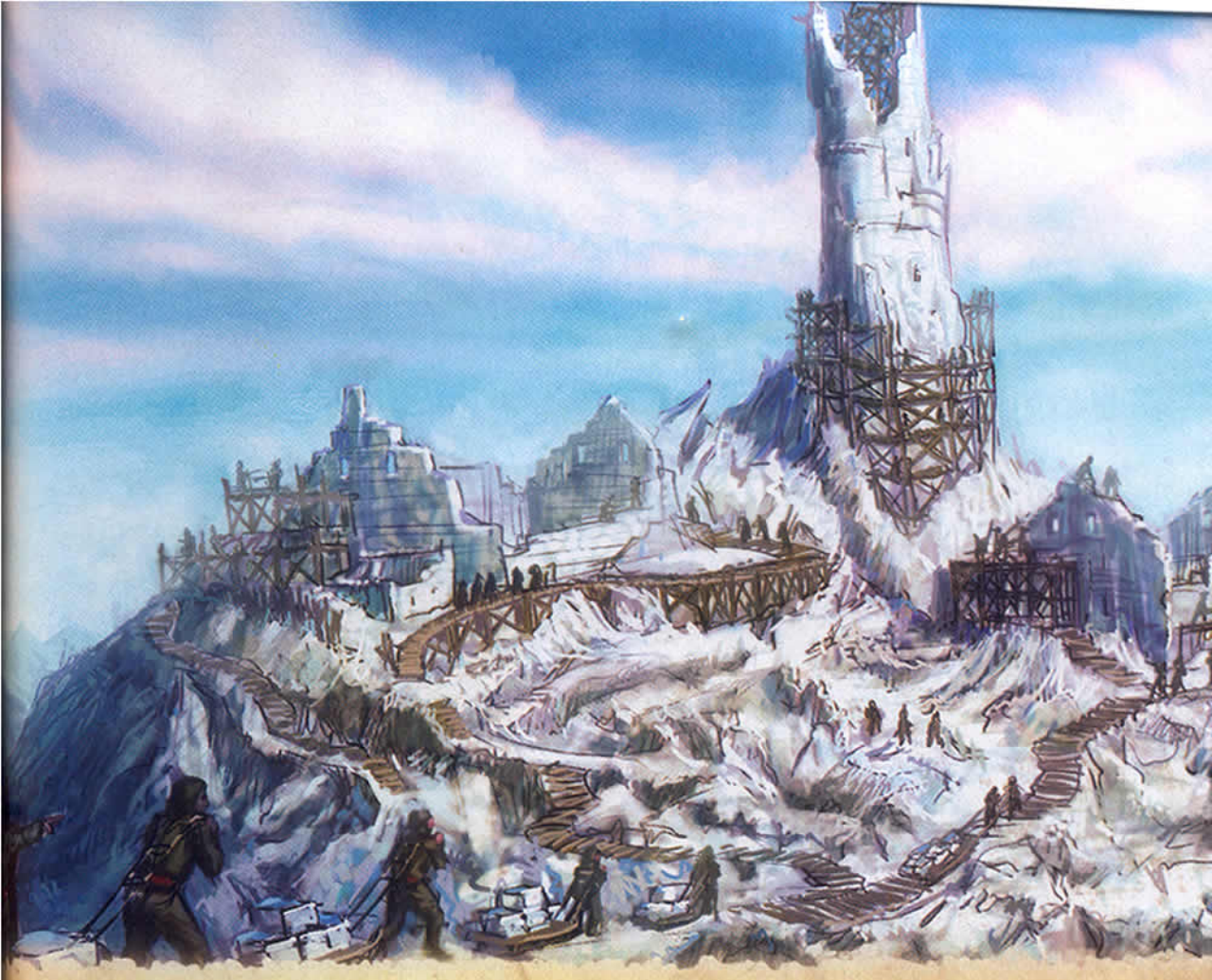
CURRICULUM

The following spells are taught at the Pilopraptis School.

0—*mage hand*
1st—*disguise self, expeditious retreat*
2nd—*alter self, cat's grace*
3rd—*displacement, gaseous form*
4th—*greater invisibility, polymorph*
5th—*baleful polymorph, seeming*
6th—*shadow walk, veil*
7th—*ethereal jaunt, mass invisibility*
8th—*iron body, screen*
9th—*shapechange, time stop*

PROHIBITED SCHOOLS

Wizards who learn at the Pilopraptis School must choose either abjuration or conjuration as their prohibited school.



THE WILWHINARHOPA WIZARDS BRAINERY

A bed of ice and a bath of snow,
We'll soon let the magic flow.
One more day and eight more blocks,
If only I brought two more socks.

Location: Any arctic environment.

Motto/Creed: "Qewuil shin a sar Dedrohone" (North to the Vortex)

Curriculum: Ice-based attacks, boosting resistances, increasing stamina, and summoning.

History/Description: Founded by eccentric mages who learned to summon yeti and live in the frozen wastes, the Wilwhinarhopa Wizards Brainery is a campus of ice that is forever being melted and rebuilt. Every summer, the campus starts to fall apart, melting in the heat. The summer is short, only lasting about a month; afterward, the campus is rebuilt using blocks cut from nearby glaciers. New students are admitted only after this thaw during the early fall.

The criterion for admission is simple: help rebuild the Brainery. This sometimes proves to be very dangerous, because the coldest time at the Brainery is right after summer, during the rebuilding period. Wizards who survive this time are then admitted into the school for training. Rebuilding takes one month and for an entire week of that time characters are exposed to cold weather (below 40° F, see *Dungeon Master's Guide*). At night, the exposure becomes severe cold (below 0° F) for eight hours.

CURRICULUM

The following spells are taught at the Brainery.

0—*resistance*
1st—*endure elements, summon monster I*
2nd—*bear's endurance, resist energy*
3rd—*sleet storm, summon monster III*
4th—*lesser globe of invulnerability, solid fog*
5th—*cone of cold, summon monster V*
6th—*Otiluke's freezing sphere, repulsion*
7th—*control weather, Mordenkainen's magnificent mansion, summon monster VII*
8th—*polar ray, prismatic wall*
9th—*prismatic sphere, summon monster IX*

PROHIBITED SCHOOLS

Wizards who learn at the Brainery must choose either enchantment or necromancy as their prohibited school.

Imps of Ill-Humor

IMBALANCE INCARNATE

BY DAVID SCHWARTZ
illustrated by Jeff Carlisle

Early in the 6th century BCE, Greek *iatros* (physicians) began to associate disease with base elements. This line of reasoning culminated in the system of four humors attributed to Hippocrates, the Father of Medicine. Understanding of the four humors became the basis of medicine in Europe for more than two millennia. During the Middle Ages, the Classical world was seen as a golden age, and the writings of Hippocrates and those who followed him became sacrosanct. Only in the 18th century, when empirical science began to take hold, did diagnosis by humors fall out of favor. The four humors are traditionally known as:

Choler (yellow bile): Choler is warm and dry. It is associated with the element of fire and the season of Summer. Corruption of the choler produces symptoms of fever, vomiting, and seizures (e.g., cackle fever, the shakes).

Melancholy (black bile): Melancholy is cool and dry. It is associated with the element of earth and the season of Autumn. Corruption of the melancholy produces symptoms such as ashen skin and insensitivity, particularly numbness (e.g., blinding sickness, filth fever).

Phlegm: Phlegm is cool and moist. It is associated with the element of water and the season of Winter. Corruption of the phlegm include symptoms such as nasal congestion, cold-sweats, and fluid in the lungs (e.g., mindfire, slimy doom).

Sanguis (blood): Sanguis is warm and moist. It is associated with the element of air and the season of Spring. Corruption of the sanguis produces symptoms that range from vanity to hemorrhaging (e.g., red ache).

Once the corrupted humor is identified, treatment combines two elements: producing good humors through diet, exercise, and medicinal herbs; and expelling bad humors with purgatives, bloodletting, and leeches.

Humor and Personality

In addition to their effects on the physical body, humors are also said to affect a person's personality. Ideally, a person's personality should contain the four

humors in equal amounts. Most people, however show a tendency toward one humor over the others. Too much of one humor causes an imbalance, otherwise known as a personality disorder.

Choler regulates a person's ego. Those with choleric personalities are confident and ambitious. However, too much choler leads to behavior that is domineering or outright violent. Choleric archetypes include the proud barbarian and the cocky sorcerer.

Melancholy affects one's awareness and self-control. People with melancholic personalities are temperate in their actions and straightforward in their thinking. Unfortunately, too much melancholy leads to feelings of depression and apathy. Melancholic archetypes include the stern cleric and the grim assassin.

Phlegm measures a person's intellect. Those with phlegmatic personalities are thoughtful and meticulous. Too much phlegm, however, causes one to become slow to act and self-involved. Phlegmatic archetypes include the introspective wizard and the stoic general.

Sanguis corresponds with one's social abilities. People with sanguine personalities make friends easily and are good leaders. A person with too much sanguis may be overly friendly or engage in overindulgent behavior. Sanguine archetypes include the lovable rogue and the rousing orator.

Imps of Ill-Humor

Imps of ill-humor are the embodiment of unchecked passions. Each kind possesses the negative qualities of one of the four humors.

Like other impish creatures, imps of ill-humor resemble small, winged humanoids. Their flesh is sickly, flushed with corrupt humors. Their faces are emotional masks, changing little regardless of the circumstances.

Imps of ill-humor reside on the evil-aligned Outer Planes. Like others of their ilk, imps of ill-humor are most often encountered in the service of fiends or powerful wizards. Each of these imps can be acquired as a familiar with the Improved Familiar feat by a Neutral Evil 7th-level arcane spellcaster.

Imps of ill-humor speak Abyssal, Common, and Infernal.

Combat

Imps of ill-humor fight differently depending on their temperament. However, all enjoy the taste of fresh humors (both the actual fluid and its spiritual essence) and aim to sting an opponent if possible. Their sting syphons the humors from the target, causing an imbalance. Some sages speculate that stolen humors are like a drug to these imps, giving them temporary relief from their imbalanced condition.

An imp of ill-humor's natural weapons, as well as any weapons it wields, are treated as evil-aligned for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction. Imps of ill-humor can be summoned using a *summon monster IV* spell.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, an imp of ill-humor must hit with a claw attack. If it wins the ensuing grapple check, it establishes a hold and attempts to sting the target as often as possible. Imps of ill-humor receive a +4 racial bonus on grapple checks, which is already included in their statistics.

Imbalance (Su): A living creature stung by an imp of ill-humor must succeed on a DC 13 Will save or suffer humor imbalance. The effects of imbalance vary with the type of imp (see the following descriptions). Imbalance is permanent, but can be removed with a *remove disease* or *heal* spell. The save DC is Charisma based.

Contagion (Sp): An imp of ill-humor can cast *contagion* once per day as the spell (caster level 5th). The disease chosen must be one associated with the imp's humor.

Choleric Imp

Small Outsider (Evil, Extraplanar)
Hit Dice: 3d8 (13 hp)
Initiative: +5
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 30 ft. (average)
Armor Class: 15 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +3 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 14
Base Attack/Grapple: +3/+5
Attack: Claw +6 melee (1d3+2)
Full Attack: 2 claws +6 melee (1d3+2) and sting +1 melee (1d3+1 plus imbalance)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Contagion, imbalance, improved grab

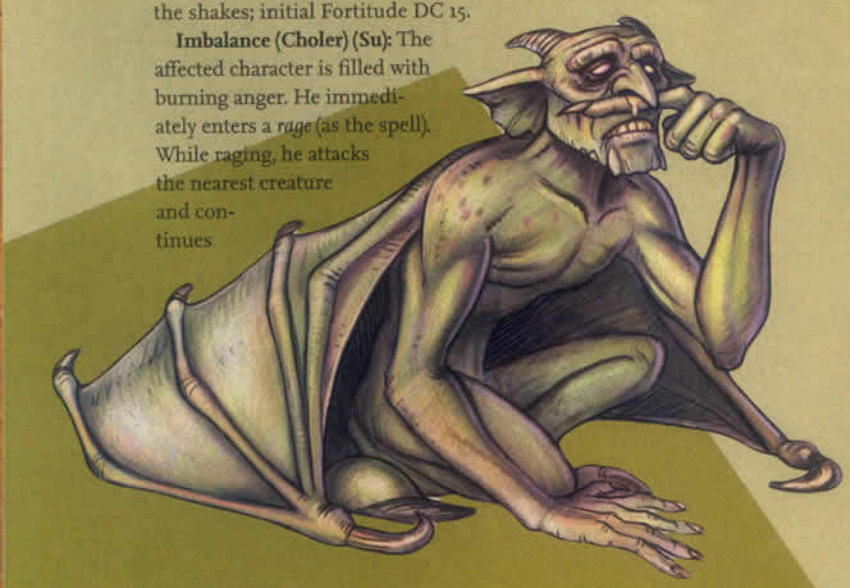
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/magic, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 2, immunity to disease and poison, resistance to fire 5
Saves: Fort +3, Ref +4, Will + 4
Abilities: Str 15, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 15
Skills: Bluff +8, Diplomacy +4, Disguise +2 (+4 acting), Escape Artist +7, Heal +7, Hide +11, Intimidate +10, Listen +7, Move Silently +7, Spot +7, Use Rope +1 (+3 with bindings)
Feats: Improved Initiative, Power Attack
Environment: Any evil-aligned plane
Organization: Solitary, gang (2–4 imps of mixed type), mob (5–12 imps of mixed type)
Challenge Rating: 3
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always neutral evil
Advancement: 4–6 HD (Small); 7–9 HD (Medium)
Level Adjustment: — (Improved Familiar)

This small, winged humanoid has jaundiced skin and wears an expression of seething anger.

Choleric imps are angry at the world and pick a fight with the least provocation. In combat, they attack relentlessly, with little regard for their own safety.

Contagion (Sp): Cackle fever or the shakes; initial Fortitude DC 15.

Imbalance (Choler) (Su): The affected character is filled with burning anger. He immediately enters a *rage* (as the spell). While raging, he attacks the nearest creature and continues to fight until unconscious, dead, or no living things remain within 30 feet. Until cured of this imbalance, the first time the affected character attacks or is attacked in melee, he must make another Will save or again enter this beserker rage.



Melancholic Imp

Small Outsider (Evil, Extraplanar)
Hit Dice: 3d8+3 (16 hp)
Initiative: +2
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 30 ft. (average)
Armor Class: 16 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +3 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 14
Base Attack/Grapple: +3/+3
Attack: Claw +6 melee (1d3)
Full Attack: 2 claws +6 melee (1d3) and sting +1 melee (1d3 plus imbalance)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Contagion, imbalance, improved grab
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/magic, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 2, immunity to disease and poison, resistance to acid 5
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +5, Will + 4
Abilities: Str 10, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 15
Skills: Bluff +8, Diplomacy +4, Disguise +2 (+4 acting), Escape Artist +8, Heal +7, Hide +12, Intimidate +7, Listen +7, Move Silently +7, Spot +7, Use Rope +2 (+4 with bindings)
Feats: Dodge, Weapon Finesse
Environment: Any evil-aligned plane
Organization: Solitary, gang (2–4 imps of mixed type), mob (5–12 imps of mixed type)
Challenge Rating: 3
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always neutral evil
Advancement: 4–6 HD (Small); 7–9 HD (Medium)
Level Adjustment: — (Improved Familiar)

This small, winged humanoid has a mournful expression on its ashen face.

Melancholic imps are pessimistic and fatalistic. They prefer to avoid combat, and often try to talk their way out of conflict, usually by propounding their bleak worldview. However, if given the opportunity, they have no scruples against stabbing someone in the back.

Contagion (Sp): Blinding sickness or filth fever; initial Fortitude DC 15.

Imbalance (Melancholy) (Su): The affected creature is struck with deep depression and takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, ability checks, skill checks, and weapon damage rolls. The first time the affected character attacks or is attacked in a subsequent melee, he may make another Will save to overcome this effect until the end of the encounter (after which the penalties return).

Phlegmatic Imp

Small Outsider (Evil, Extraplanar)
Hit Dice: 3d8+6 (19 hp)
Initiative: +0
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 30 ft. (average)
Armor Class: 14 (+1 size, +3 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 14
Base Attack/Grapple: +3/+4
Attack: Claw +5 melee (1d3+1)
Full Attack: 2 claws +5 melee (1d3+1) and sting +0 melee (1d3 plus imbalance)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Contagion, imbalance, improved grab

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/magic, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 2, immunity to disease and poison, resistance to cold 5
Saves: Fort +5, Ref +3, Will + 4
Abilities: Str 13, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 15
Skills: Bluff +10, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +2 (+4 acting), Heal +7, Hide +10, Intimidate +10, Listen +7, Move Silently +6, Spot +7
Feats: Persuasive, Power Attack
Environment: Any evil-aligned plane
Organization: Solitary, gang (2–4 imps of mixed type), mob (5–12 imps of mixed type)
Challenge Rating: 3
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always neutral evil
Advancement: 4–6 HD (Small); 7–9 HD (Medium)
Level Adjustment: — (Improved Familiar)

This small, winged creature has sickly, green-tinged skin and eyes that seem unable to focus.

Phlegmatic imps are lazy, cowardly, and narcissistic. Although more forward thinking than most other imps, phlegmatic imps spend most of their time thinking of ways to get others to do their work for them. In combat, they prefer to let others do the fighting, attacking only when the danger to themselves is minimal.

Contagion (Sp): Mindfire or slimy doom; initial Fortitude DC 15.

Imbalance (Phlegm): The affected creature becomes sluggish, apathetic, and unresponsive as per the *slow* spell. The first time the affected character attacks or is attacked in a subsequent melee, he may make another Will save to overcome this effect until the end of the encounter (after which it returns). A *haste* spell counters this effect for the duration of the *haste* spell.

Sanguine Imp

Small Outsider (Evil, Extraplanar)
Hit Dice: 3d8+3 (16 hp)
Initiative: +1
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 30 ft. (average)
Armor Class: 15 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +3 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 14
Base Attack/Grapple: +3/+4
Attack: Claw +5 melee (1d3+1)
Full Attack: 2 claws +5 melee (1d3+1) and sting +0 melee (1d4 plus imbalance)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Contagion, imbalance, improved grab
Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/magic, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 2, immunity to disease and poison, resistance to electricity 5
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +4, Will + 4
Abilities: Str 13, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 15
Skills: Bluff +8, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +2 (+4 acting), Escape Artist +7, Heal +7, Hide +11, Intimidate +4, Listen +7, Move Silently +7, Spot +7, Use Rope +1 (+3 with bindings)
Feats: Dodge, Mobility
Environment: Any evil-aligned plane
Organization: Solitary, gang (2–4 imps of mixed type), mob (5–12 imps of mixed type)
Challenge Rating: 3
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always neutral evil
Advancement: 4–6 HD (Small); 7–9 HD (Medium)
Level Adjustment: — (Improved Familiar)

This small, winged creature's pink skin is marked with gin blossoms. It has a corpulent build and an over-sized, toothy smile.

Sanguine imps are jovial and genial. These imps are happy to engage in conversation with interesting company. However, they show equal glee when attacking folks who fail to entertain them. Sanguine imps prefer to stay mobile in combat, often jumping from foe to foe as the whim strikes them.

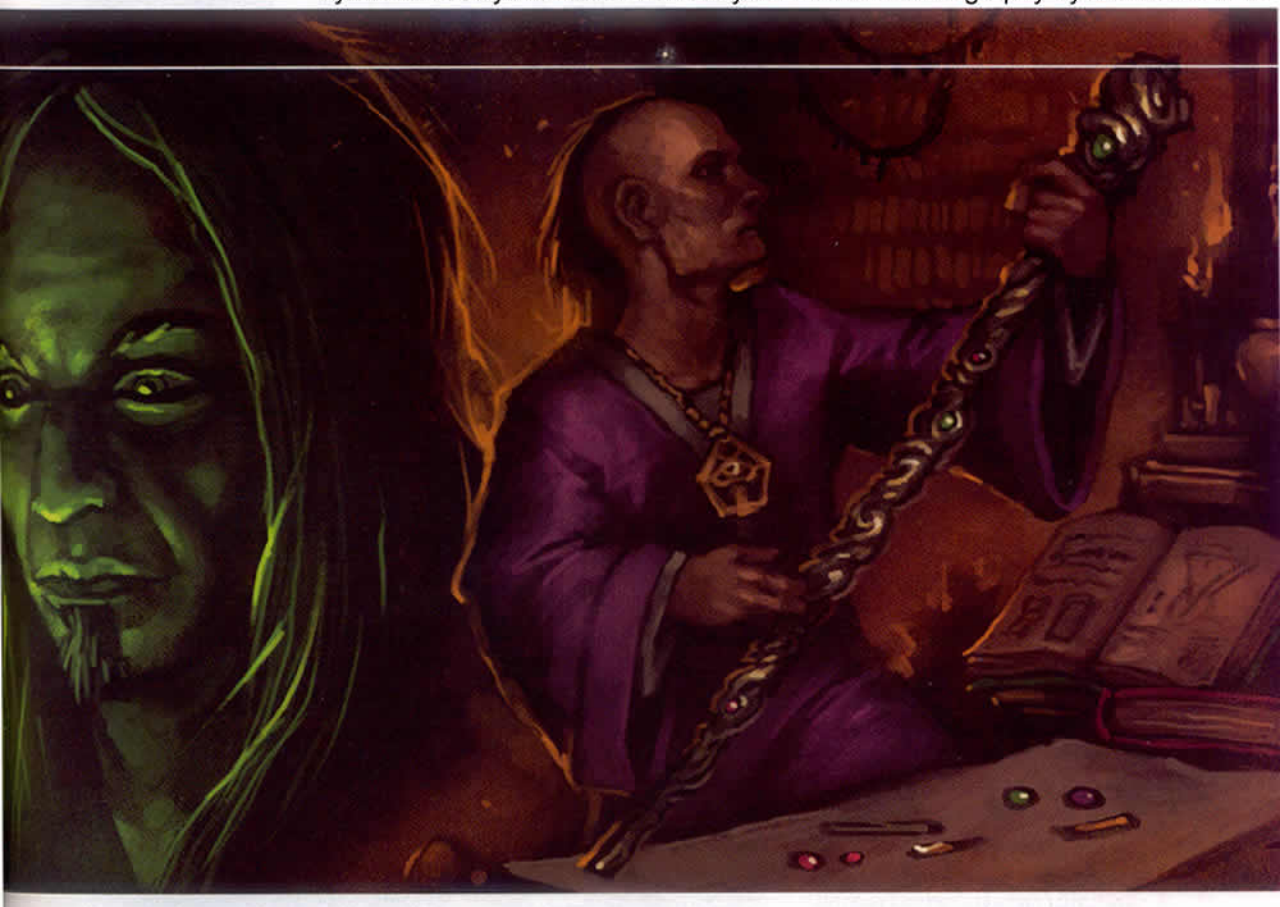
Contagion (Sp): Red ache; initial Fortitude DC 15.

Imbalance (Sanguis): The affected creature becomes easily amused. He is immediately affected by the spell *Tasha's hideous laughter* and continues to laugh for 1d4 rounds. In addition, the first time the affected character attacks or is attacked in melee, he must make another Will save or again suffer fits of laughter for 1d4 rounds.

CORE BELIEFS:

BOCCOB

By Sean K. Reynolds - illustrated by Matt Dixon - cartography by Rob Lazzaretti



Boccob is the Archmage of the deities. He has traveled through countless planes that even the gods of madness, death, and terror avoid. He sees the past, all the way back to the creation of the world, and even the future when magic itself has succumbed to a slow wasting end. He battles a deity who wishes to unravel the fabric of the universe, using his staff of the magi as fulcrum for his power and every iota of magic as the force to leverage his victory. He knows every spell ever crafted and every magic item ever made, has raised mortals to godhood, and has blasted would-be challengers into oblivion. He is above mortal concerns, willing to use good and evil, law and chaos, to serve his purposes, gaining strength by keeping them balanced in opposition. He knows what you are going to do before you know it yourself, and his plans already account for it.

Boccob is an ancient deity known by all races of the world, certainly predating all civilizations and all but the oldest of gods. He oversees the maintenance of magic on Oerth and investigates anything that weakens or interrupts the power of magic. Called the Uncaring, Boccob is indifferent to whether or not people worship him, as his strength is based on the power of magic itself rather than mortal worship. He embraces balance as his philosophy, eschewing alignment interests and extreme points of view and holding knowledge as his ultimate goal.

His role as god of foreknowledge is a blessing and a curse, for his vision shows him that magic is declining on Oerth and will eventually fade away. As he believes that Oerth's magic is what makes it a unique and fascinating place—having visited parallel worlds with no magic at all, and finding them dull and petty in their technological conflicts—its slow decline is a source of great sadness for him and he works to forestall it as long as possible, although he knows in the end he will eventually fail. He believes that Tharizdun (*Complete Divine*, page 123), an evil god of entropy imprisoned ages ago by the concerted efforts of all the gods, is somehow responsible despite his confinement, and Boccob always investigates news and rumors of Tharizdun's activities and artifacts.

All times and planes are open to Boccob. He constantly seeks to learn more of planar structures, the logic of magic, long-lost lore, and the underpinnings of magic's role in the multiverse, hoping to find another clue to delaying the eventual decline of magic on Oerth. Some say that Boccob's ability to travel all planes freely means that he can even enter another deity's personal domain without permission. This remains a theory, as he has never done such a thing, mainly as that would anger any deity whose sanctuary he violated. As an aspect of keeping the balance in all things, Boccob neither provokes nor avoids conflicts. He does not instigate needless combat but stands up to any fool who dares challenge him.

Boccob manipulates the energies of the Positive and Negative Energy Planes as he wishes, mixing them as he desires to create effects impossible to any other being. His mastery allows him to create the lethal *Disk of Concordant Opposition* at will, a seemingly gray construct of interwoven positive and negative energy that can destroy any creature, object, or force it comes into contact with. Boccob has used the Disk to obliterate several liches, archfiends, and mortal wizards who sought to challenge him or interfere

THE BASICS

Boccob is a neutral deity and his clerics are always neutral (the majority), chaotic neutral (a small minority), lawful neutral, neutral evil, or neutral good. Boccob's clerics traditionally wear purple robes with gold trim or gold runes where the trim would be. His symbol is an eye within a pentagram, usually worn as an amulet. Also called the Archmage of the Deities, the Uncaring, and Lord of All Magics, his planar home is in the plane called the Outlands (although the folk of Oerth often call this place Concordant Opposition, for which his famous magical attack is named). His portfolio includes magic, arcane knowledge, foresight, nonintervention, and balance. His primary worshipers are sages, oracles, and seers, although many wizards consider him their patron. His domains are Knowledge, Magic, and Trickery. His favored weapon is the quarterstaff, representing his *staff of the magi*.

HOLY TEXTS

Most clerics of Boccob are very familiar with the following holy texts, even if their understanding of a book makes it heretical in their eyes. Those seeking out these texts can find them at nearly any shrine or temple dedicated to the Lord of All Magics.

The Uncaring's Will: This is the definitive text of Boccob's faith. It is part sermon, part prophecy, and part guideline for proper behavior. It is broken into five chapters each with five subchapters, covering the origin of the faith, Boccob's rare direct missives to his followers, letters from early members of the religion, and the results of many potent divinations revealing the outcome of key events (although only someone with a background in prophecy has any chance of interpreting them correctly). Every cleric of Boccob has a copy of this book. Some of them are incredibly old and decorated with gilt lettering, calligraphy, and illuminations, while others are very small and simple.

Words of the Prophets: An extensive collection of prophecies, whether about minor subjects of contested value and veracity, or from sometimes-unreliable sources, this book is the source of many debates within the church. Every cleric is required to study it as a lesson in the problems of vague prophecy. Every few years someone finds enough clues to connect part of the book to ongoing events. Those who embrace the book in its entirety tend to have an apocalyptic mindset, as many of its verses pertain to destruction and mayhem.

The Rare Water: Although some members of the faith consider this book a heresy and its adherents misguided fools, it is gaining strength among lawful followers of Boccob. The book postulates that magic is a finite resource and every item created or spell cast expends a part of it, using selected quotes from *The Uncaring's Will* to back up its assertions in a roundabout fashion. Followers of this doctrine seek to limit the use of magic except in emergency situations, policing themselves and others as best they can with their limited numbers and no support from the main church.

with his work; so complete was their destruction that even their names are lost and few records even hint at their existence at all. Boccob can tune the Disk's mix of energies to bypass a creature's special defenses or take advantage of its vulnerabilities.

Boccob has a personal interest in the creation of new magic, whether items, spells, or alchemical formulas. Rather than depleting magic, each act of magical creativity adds one more drop of fuel to the lamp that is Oerth's magic, giving it a moment's more time before it is snuffed out. Those researching new magic often first consult with one of Boccob's clerics or utter a short prayer to him for luck and inspiration in their work. As he is said to carry many amulets and protective devices, such things created by mortals often bear his symbol even when created by worshipers of other deities, so strong is the link between Boccob and item-crafting. Boccob's domain, the Library of Lore within the plane of Concordant Opposition (Outlands), contains a copy of every magic item ever crafted by mortal hands, every spell ever created, and every alchemical formula successfully tested (although some believe these items are but representations that Boccob can use to duplicate the actual item if he needed to, but are otherwise useless to all others).

Boccob most commonly appears as a man in purple robes covered in shimmering gold runes, usually with gray hair, a staff, and some kind of protective amulet. He carries the first *staff of the magi*, which also has all the powers of a *staff of conjuration*. Other details of Boccob's appearance vary from location to location, as local faiths and races describe him as looking like them. For example, the Baklunish people (who know him as Al-Zarad) show him as olive-skinned and with Bakluni facial features, while the Suel depict him as fair-haired and fair skinned.

Boccob's church is primarily concerned with protecting magic and discovering old lore. It does not actively encourage others to study magic (although there is at least one school run by clerics), but neither does it consider magic something only an elite few should know. The church promotes balance above alignment concerns and fights to push back the encroachment of good just as it would the oppression of evil. The church teaches that magic is the source of all that is important on Oerth, and magic must be preserved so that the balance can be preserved. Boccob's is one of the rare churches that doesn't try to destroy dangerous magic items, even those made by beings

who oppose the church's teachings. Instead, they lock away items they feel are too dangerous (items that destroy magic are always hidden this way) and use the remainder to bargain with rival faiths, often selling them to more appropriate owners and using the money to finance further research. Most of his worshipers are sages, seers, and oracles; he has relatively few clerics compared to other deities of his power.

Most temples of Boccob are set away from outside interference and the worshipers within devote their time to research when they feel the world is in accord with balance. Part of their research includes prophecies, which they guard carefully lest such knowledge fall into the wrong hands. In lands where the forces of law, chaos, good, or evil grow too strong and aggressive, churches of Boccob become more active in the surrounding area, pushing to restore the balance by opposing the more prevalent philosophies. As localized shifts in the balance are usually compensated for by opposite shifts in other areas, the church rarely has to intervene unless the offender tries to expand its influence beyond an acceptable amount. For example, the church is likely to ignore an introverted country with extremist views that has little effect on its neighbors, but takes action against a small good organization that actively works to promote its agenda in a widespread area.

Because of his connection to magic items and staffs in particular, the staff is an important symbol in Boccob's church. Clerics and wizards alike consider it a point of pride to own a *staff of power* at some point in their lives, and in many temples a *staff of power* (sometimes with only one charge remaining) is a ceremonial item of great spiritual weight, used during the most important rituals of the faith. News of the location of a lost *staff of power* (moreso for a *staff of the magi*) is the cause of great excitement among the faithful and is one of the rare times for which even the older members of the church might leave a temple or library for an extended period.

APHORISMS

The everyday sayings and adages of the faithful tell a great deal about their beliefs and morals. The sample here is representative of the many sayings common to clerics of Boccob.

Balance above morality, knowledge above all: This is the central creed of the faith, worn into the mind of every acolyte and apprentice. In times of stress they repeat this to themselves like a mantra until they can focus on the task at hand. It's such a conditioned response that if presented with an absurd question or choice of actions a believer's first response is usually to quote it.

Magic makes the world stranger than we could possibly imagine: This is typically used as a response to folk who doubt the existence of something bizarre in the world, such as a sinking island or a forest made of stony humanlike pillars. Those who study the past, future, and the multitude of planes are more likely to accept an obscure report of something that can only be explained by magic.

Magic is the lifeblood of Oerth: A follower of Boccob is expected to nurture and protect magic as he would his own blood. In this way he extends and invigorates his world just as eating sustains his own body. Just as a sickened body cannot uphold the balance, weakened magic cannot uphold Oerth.

A CLERIC'S ROLE

Nine-tenths of Boccob's clerics are at least middle aged, and this affects their outlook. While all of them are expected to devote themselves to the pursuit of knowledge, the older ones go about it with a grave and serious outlook, fully understanding the inexorable dwindling of magic on Oerth just as they experience age and infirmity taking hold in their own bodies. Of these old ones, most of them rarely set foot outside of a temple, as their strengths lie in information and prophecy, not in daggers and combat magic. They use their spells and libraries to discover links to lost magic, the keys to new uses of its power, and the whispers of threats on the horizon. Boccob's older clerics view themselves as seers, oracles, and prophets, relying on their connection with the Lord of All Magics to guide their work.

The remainder of the clergy are young and vital, naïve in the eyes of the elders but better able to take necessary action in the world outside the library's walls. These younger followers make up almost all of the adventuring clerics of Boccob, only retiring to more scholarly work when injury, affliction, or age force them to. They are the ones who join or lead expeditions to recover lost magical treasures, tomes of lore, and the like. Filled with a sense of invulnerability and immortality unique to the young, they are the active and extroverted part of the church, countering the reactive and introverted tendencies of the elders. Although the two sides disagree on methods, there is no animosity—younger clerics respect the elders for their knowledge and experience, the elders respect the younger ones for their vigor and willingness to risk life and limb for the church's needs. As such, most PC clerics of Boccob are relatively young.

Regardless of age, all clerics are expected to keep up on their studies, reflected in game terms by maximizing their ranks in Knowledge (arcana) and Spellcraft; failure to do so results in chastisement and even the loss of certain privileges within the church's purview. Most clerics also stay informed on at least one other Knowledge skill.

Extremism is frowned upon by the church. Although it is possible for his clerics to have alignments other than neutral, most believe these inclinations mellow with age and over time the cleric changes to a

purely neutral outlook. An elder cleric with such a "radical" philosophy is the source of much gossip and unlikely to get far in the church hierarchy.

Overall, there are fewer chaotic neutral clerics of Boccob than any other alignment. This is partly because such individuals have little respect for tradition or the future needs of the church and partly because those with this outlook find Zagyg's church much more to their liking. It's not unusual, on the other hand, for a cleric of Zagyg to eventually join Boccob's faith.

The one significant taboo for any cleric is the destruction of magic, whether spell or item (using a limited-use item such as a scroll or wand does not count as "destruction," only the deliberate breaking of an item does). Clerics of Boccob know they can always hand over a magic item to the church for archiving, and they believe that something can be learned from any magic thing. Even a good cleric of Boccob considers destroying an unholy magic item an abhorrent act; he would rather give it to his temple—and be appropriately compensated for it—which would then hand it over to someone else in the church who could make use of it (for example, a cleric in an area where zealous do-gooders threaten the balance) or store it. Even the accidental destruction of magic (such as when one of an enemy's items is damaged after a failed saving throw against a spell) is a tragedy requiring penance.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Boccob is an aloof deity, not out of arrogance but because his work is of the utmost importance and the distractions of celestial politics are a waste of his valuable time. He is coolly neutral toward all other deities, postponing meetings when he must and ignoring taunts. He is slightly more tolerant of the goddess Wee Jas, although he feels her "extraneous" interests—beauty and death—distract her from her true potential and effectiveness as a deity of magic. The only other deity he has any regular contact with is his demigod-servant Zagyg, who acts as his liaison to other deities and the mortal world. Boccob is hostile to Tharizdun, but as that entity is imprisoned and incommunicative the Lord of All Magics technically has no interaction with him at all.

A WIZARD'S ROLE

Boccob's clerics have the option of choosing the Magic domain, causing the lines between clerics and wizards to blur. Sorcerers and wizards function under the same general mandates as clerics, although with looser guidelines as they are not considered as attuned to Boccob's will as clerics. Thus, arcane spellcasters are allowed to be any alignment, and the church teaches that an extremist wizard of one type is usually offset by an extremist of the opposite type, keeping the overall balance on Oerth. Because of their varied specialties, some young wizards—particularly diviners—end adventuring early, while others who study more aggressive spells might remain active explorers until they suddenly drop from old age.

Although it is not an outright taboo for a Boccobite wizard to destroy a magic item, it is discouraged, and few would do so if they had a choice. It is far more preferable to take an unwanted item to one of Boccob's temples and sell or trade it there for something of use. Only when the magic item's very nature is dangerous (such as with some cursed items) does a wizard normally consider breaking the item over selling it.

HOLIDAYS

The faithful of Boccob celebrate a number of holidays. Although few are open to the public, they regularly include a number of invited guests pertinent to the ceremony.

Celestial Conjunction: With their experience in prophecy and divination, true astrology plays a significant role in the official activities of Boccob's clerics. Particularly fortuitous conjunctions of stars and moons are a time to celebrate and analyze their future (for the serious and reserved followers of Boccob, even a holiday is a kind of work). Like all services honoring Boccob, these conjunction holidays involve complex rituals, incense burning, and recitations from works honoring knowledge. Certain magic items with symbolic significance (such as a *robe of stars* or a *staff of power*) are

ZAGYG

Most believe that Zagyg—god of humor, eccentricity, occult lore, and unpredictability—was once Zagig Yragerne, a wizard and former mayor of the city of Greyhawk who found a way to become a divine being. The mortal wizard somehow captured nine demigods of opposing temperaments and imprisoned them under his castle. Although the demigods were later freed by a group of adventurers, their temporary confinement was apparently sufficient to allow Zagig to ascend to godhood, possibly with the help of Boccob. Eccentric (and possibly mad) when a mortal, the demigod retained this aspect after his transformation; his holy symbol incorporates the rune meaning "insanity." While he favors dark blue and silver colors, he has little constancy in his physical depictions and shows no preference for any particular weapon or magical tool, although his followers prefer the dagger because of his wizardly origins. He is Boccob's primary agent and liaison to mortals and other deities, although he puts his own odd twist on any mission. He also associates with Celestian, Fharlanghn's brother and counterpart in celestial and planar journeys.

Zagyg reveals little, but believes that all deserve to be entertained and surprised by humor, although preferably in a manner that leaves them wondering for some time. Providing this service is a high priority for him. Simultaneously, the quest for odd bits of information on magic is of utmost importance. The various small clusters of his faith focus on one type of humor for a time and then abandon it when they believe it perfected, only to take it up again after a seemingly random interval. Outside of his rare temples, worshipers are unlikely to encounter each other and less likely to admit their common faith—thus, the joke.

Zagyg's few clerics enjoy bringing strangeness and humor to the lives of those around them, especially those in need of comedy to lift up their dulled souls. Many work as bards, and are forced to travel far when their jokes are misunderstood or cause offense. They take advantage of any opportunities during their travels to uncover lost magical knowledge. Most have at least one odd personality quirk, although whether this is an actual trait or one affected solely for the observer is debatable.

Alignment: CN (often acts CG). **Domains:** Chaos, Knowledge, Magic. **Favored Weapon:** dagger.

often used in these rituals. Many of the great prophesies concerning future events are made during celestial conjunctions, and such proclamations are often the focus of such celebrations.

Great Discovery: Each temple celebrates this holiday early in the year, honoring their discoveries in lore and magic from the previous year. Clerics use this holiday to inform other temples of their ongoing work, announce graduating wizards and acolytes, and compare notes. Every five years they expand the holiday to include testing interested parties for magical or oracular talent, sponsoring explorations into places they've unearthed with the potential for great magical finds, and the restocking of their armories with useful magic items (particularly wands) either by creating more or buying those available.

Last Rite of the Prophet: When a ranking cleric or powerful wizard of the faith dies, whether or not he is an actual prophet, the funeral is a somber church holiday. Clerics read a eulogy, recite a list of significant magic and lore discovered or created by the deceased, and walk a perimeter (of the temple, graveyard, or a magical site) while burning potent incense. Before the burial, the church uses a ritual to draw some of the magical power from a willing recently departed spirit and use it to add one or more charges to a magic item; in this way a part of the person remains behind to aid the church in the mortal world.

THREE MYTHS

Although the specifics vary from region to region and even temple to temple, a number of myths are common amongst the faithful. Some find their way into recorded texts, but they are nonetheless considered myths by most sages and scholars.

Boccob and the Demon Prince: This myth tells of how Boccob used his knowledge and magic to outwit and bind a demon prince and his army for a thousand years. It goes on to explain how he used his power over the demon to counteract the plans of a well-meaning but shortsighted solar, maintaining the balance between good and evil. The myth shows the faithful that careful planning and knowledge of your opponent allows you to overcome a physically superior foe, even one that is resistant to magic, and

furthermore that it is better to bind and utilize a dangerous resource rather than destroy it outright.

The Wizard and the Spell-fountain: This myth tells of a greedy wizard who discovered a wellspring of magical energy in a remote location. Day by day he eked magic from it, increasing his own power in small increments, until it finally dried up. Only later did he discover in another wizard's library that such a font lasted longer the more people used it, each wizard's power causing a resonant effect within the source that added to its capacity. If he had shared the spring with others, he and everyone involved would have gained more from it, and perhaps found a way to make it permanent. The moral of this myth is that magic is a tool that should be used and shared, not hoarded and kept secret—and like money, it must be spent to make more of it.

The Lost Spell and the End of Magic: Not so much a myth as an often-retold prophecy, this story explains Boccob's discovery that the magic of Oerth is fading and will eventually dwindle away completely. The future-myth speaks of the existence of a great spell that can end the decline, but it is found too late due to laziness of researchers in that time period. This myth is a warning for modern followers of Boccob—spend less time in frivolous pursuits such as love and feasting lest your great discovery come too late. Furthermore, it suggests that if more work in this area is done today, there is less remaining for later researchers and the devout in the future might discover the spell in time.

PRESTIGE CLASS SUGGESTIONS

Many Boccobites pursue prestige classes that enhance their ability to find information and divine the future, such as the divine oracle (*Complete Divine*, page 34), loremaster (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 191), or sybil (*Savage Species*, page 90). Others explore the fundamental forces of the universe or the planes, taking prestige classes such as the agent retriever (*Epic Level Handbook*, page 24), cosmic descryer (*Epic Level Handbook*, page 26), elemental savant (*Complete Arcane*, page 32), or planeshifter (*Manual of the Planes*, page 30). Some just try to build and concentrate their power in spectacular ways or blur the boundaries between the arcane and the divine, using classes like the archmage (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 178), hierophant (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 188), mystic theurge (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 192), thaumaturgist (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 196), or wayfarer guide (*Complete Arcane*, page 65).

BOCCOB'S SUMMON MONSTER LIST

In his travels through the infinite planes Boccob has discovered and bound many creatures to his service. His worshipers (both wizards and clerics) can use *summon monster* spells to summon the following creatures in addition to the normal creatures listed in the spells.

Summon Monster I
Tiny animated object* (statue) (N)

Summon Monster II
Small animated object* (statue) (N)

Summon Monster III
Medium animated object* (statue) (N)
Ethereal marauder (N)

Summon Monster IV
Doppelganger* (N)
Large animated object* (statue) (N)
Pseudodragon* (NG)

Summon Monster VI
Ravid (N)

Summon Monster VII
Celestial or fiendish will-o-wisp† (NE or NG)
Flesh golem* (N)

Summon Monster VIII
Stone golem* (N)
Zelekhut inevitable (LN)

** This creature has the extraplanar subtype but otherwise has the normal statistics for a creature of its kind.*

† This creature has the extraplanar subtype and a different alignment but otherwise has the normal statistics for a creature of its kind.

RELICS OF THE FAITH

The clerics of Boccob hold all magic items in high regard, but some are valued above all others. Although powerful these items are not artifacts, but due to their unique nature, they are priceless.

Darvax's Staff: This *staff of power* was wielded by a mighty Oeridian wizard during the height of the

Great Kingdom of Aerdy. Darvax was an accomplished wizard with several personalized teleportation spells, and with the staff he flitted about the Great Kingdom unearthing troves of ancient lore and carefully spinning lies and spells to maintain the balance. He left on a planar quest in his fortieth year and was never heard from again, although rumors of his staff surface every few decades in strange documents found in other realms.

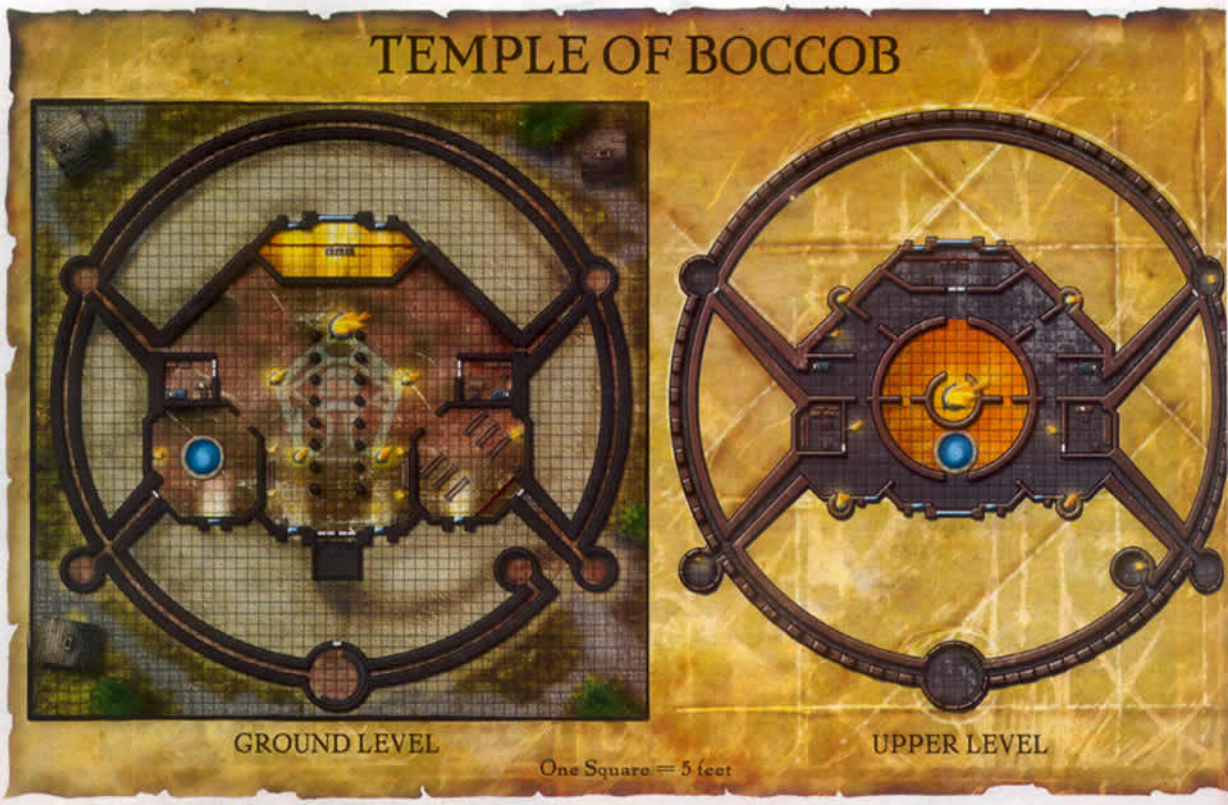
Easily recognized by the adamantine symbol of Boccob on its top end, the staff is made of a black dragon's carved thighbone. In addition to the normal powers of the staff, it can also create a *disk of concordant opposition* for 2 charges and automatically absorbs all *magic missile* spells directed at the wielder. It is possible that the item has lost all of its charges and is just a magical quarterstaff now, but given Darvax's skill it is likely he allowed for some way to recharge it, especially given that he wielded it for years and wasn't shy about using it.

Razor Bands of the Archmage: This powerful magic item is held in high esteem by the church, for it received a blessing from the god himself during an encounter on a remote plane. The item is a steel orb about 3 inches across, graven with lines, spirals, and a single instance of Boccob's symbol. It orbits its bearer's head like an *ioun stone* and provides a +6 enhancement bonus to Intelligence when doing so. The orb is also an offensive weapon, unfolding into a tangle of razor-sharp loops on command and functioning like *iron bands of Bilarro*. Any creature held by the razor bands cannot use any spell effects of 4th level or lower, just as if it were within an enemy's *globe of invulnerability*; this globelike effect only affects a 10-foot-diameter sphere, but the bearer's spells can penetrate it as if he had cast the spell. A creature caught in the bands takes 1d8+4 points of slashing damage per round (the item is considered a magic weapon for the purpose of bypassing damage reduction). The bands are

FULL FRONTAL NERDITY by Aaron Williams
SO WHERE'S ALDO?
ALDO. THE GUY WHO SITS NEXT TO YOU.
WHO?
THAT'S HIS CHARACTER'S NAME.
IT IS? I THOUGHT IT WAS HIS... WAIT. YOUR NAME ISN'T DERRIK, THEN?
THAT'S MY FIFTH-LEVEL THIEF.
THIS CAN'T JUST BE ME. DO YOU KNOW MY NAME?
UM...
WELL?
I'M GUESSING YOUR PARENTS DIDN'T NAME YOU "FAT JERK," SO I'M STUMPED.

http://www.nodwick.com

PULL UP A CHAIR
WHAT ARE WE DOING?
WE'RE MAKING NAME TAGS.
EVEN THOUGH WE'VE BEEN GAMING TOGETHER FOR YEARS, WE APPARENTLY NEVER TOLD EACH OTHER OUR NAMES.
YOU MEAN HIS ISN'T "FAT JERK?"
I GUESS THAT'S JUST A NICKNAME THEY GAVE HIM AT THE GAMING SHOP.
LIKE I'M THE ONLY OVERWEIGHT GUY THAT BUYS GAMES.
LOOKS LIKE YOU STOOD OUT FROM THE CROWD!
THAT'LL LOOK GOOD ON A RESUME.



flexible and hard to break; a creature can escape them with a DC 30 Escape Artist or Strength check, but to actually break them requires a successful DC 40 Strength check.

Sphere of Time Scrying: This *crystal ball* with special powers dates back almost to the end of the Suel empire. Although its command words are in Draconic, magical tests show that the spells used in its creation bear spell fragments common to Suloise wizardry, and most scholars believe the item was created by a Suel wizard or recent expatriate who was traveling outside his homeland.

The sphere is usually a blue or green color, but sometimes turns red or even deep violet when used. In addition to the ability to use *detect thoughts* on creatures scried with it, once per day on command it will answer one question (asked in Draconic) about a viewed creature as if using the *divination* spell, except the wearer may only use the question to learn about the creature's past instead of its future. At some point a cleric of Boccob attached a new feature to the item; anyone bearing the sphere receives a +5 insight bonus on saves to avoid being the subject of a *scrying* spell or similar magic. The existence of this additional property is concealed with a variant of *Nystul's magic aura* that affects only this property.

NEW DIVINE SPELLS

Boccob's faithful have created countless new spells over the years in homage to their deity. The spells presented here, along with numerous others, can be found in the libraries of any major temple dedicated to Boccob.

Disk of Concordant Opposition

Conjuration (Creation)
Level: Clr 5 (Boccob), Sor/Wiz 5
Components: V, S, M/DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Short (25 ft. + 5ft./2 levels)
Effect: Disk of energy
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fortitude half (object)
Spell Resistance: Yes

You hurl a hand-sized disk of interwoven positive and negative energy, a lesser form of Boccob's own power with this name. You must make a successful ranged touch attack to hit. Any creature struck by the disk takes 1d6 points of damage per caster level (to a maximum of 15d6). Any creature reduced to 0 or fewer hit points by this spell is entirely disintegrated, leaving behind only a trace of fine dust. A disintegrated creature's equipment is unaffected.

When used against an object, the *disk* simply disintegrates as much as one 5-foot cube of nonliving matter. Thus, the spell disintegrates only part of any very large object or structure targeted.

The *disk* affects even objects constructed entirely of force, such as *Bigby's interposing hand* or a *wall of force*, as long as caster level of this spell's caster equals or exceeds the caster level of the target force effect's caster, but not magical effects such as a *globe of invulnerability* or an *antimagic field*.

Half the damage from this spell comes from positive energy, half from negative energy. Unlike the negative energy from an *inflict wounds* spell, this spell does cure undead (nor does its positive energy component cure living creatures).

A creature or object that makes a successful Fortitude save is partially affected, taking only half damage. If this damage reduces the creature or object to 0 or fewer hit points, it is entirely disintegrated.

Only the first creature or object struck can be affected; that is, the *disk* affects only one target per casting.

Arcane Material Component: A small iron and electrum wheel with a rod rising from the center of one side.

Boccob's Rolling Cloud

Evocation [Electricity, Fire]
Level: Clr 4, Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V, S, M/DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Cone-shaped burst
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Reflex half (see text)
Spell Resistance: Yes

A shimmering 10-foot-tall cloud made of gold, red, violet, and blue energy springs into existence, resembling rolling fire and lightning. The cloud appears in front of you and sweeps outward to the extent of the range.

Creatures struck by the cloud take 1d6 points of damage per level (maximum 10d6). The damage is one-quarter electricity, one-quarter fire, one-quarter negative energy, and one-quarter positive energy. Unlike the negative energy from an *inflict wounds* spell, this spell does not cure undead (nor does its positive energy component cure living creatures).

A creature that fails its save is struck full-force by the cloud and must make a Fortitude save or be dazed for one round. Creatures immune to stunning are immune to this aspect of the spell.

This spell can be made permanent with a *permanency* spell (minimum caster level 11th; 1,500 XP), in which case it creates a straight cloud 5-foot-wide, 10-foot-tall, and up to 25-foot + 5 ft./2 levels long and deals 2d6 points of damage +1 point per caster level to any creature that contacts it. A creature that passes through the wall must succeed at a Fortitude save or be dazed for one round.

Arcane Material Component: Four stones, one for each of the colors of the cloud.

NPC CONTACTS FOR CLERICS BOCCOB

Players might wish to contact the Uncaring faithful for a number of reasons. They might have an evil magic item to get rid of, but fear its destruction, they might be in search of a prophesy about the future, or they might simply be in search of a *potion of cure light wounds* or *ring of protection* +1. Whatever the case, these NPCs can act as a contact for the players and as useful plot devices for the DM.

Corvin Bonrood (N male human cleric 4 of Boccob) is a young adventurous cleric of Boccob. A veteran of several excursions into deep ruins, he is starting to earn a name for himself as a finder of lost things. He gets "hunches" that lead him interesting places, and because of his success he believes they are divine inspiration from Boccob. So far his hunches have not led him wrong, so if a hunch contradicts a more reasonable course of action he'll follow the hunch, which might eventually get him into trouble.

Corvin is short and thin, with black hair, a short beard, and the start of a potbelly. He's friendly in an awkward sort of way, with a habit of bringing up stories of his past adventures as if they were relevant to the current topic (although they often are not).

Corvin is a good contact for low-level adventurers anywhere, as part of a temple or acting solo. On his own and flush with money from an adventure, he can buy dangerous magic items from a cash-starved party or sell some of his single-use items to a group of PCs in need of some items in a magic-poor area. If part of a temple, he can be their liaison, or even join the party as a guide. If following a hunch, he might even turn up unexpectedly in the middle of an adventure right when the PCs need some help.

Jasra Redira (N female human cleric 10 of Boccob) is a middle-aged member of the church transitioning from an explorer to a full-time researcher. She spent many years as a field agent of the church, has lost many comrades in the course of her work, and is ready to devote the rest of her life to study.

Jasra is tall, although she appears shorter than she actually is because she leans on a staff to favor an old injury to her left leg. Her Suel heritage is obvious, as she has white-blonde hair, fair skin, and blue eyes. Worry lines frame her eyes and mouth and she normally keeps her hair tied back behind her head.

Jasra is an excellent contact for PCs searching for information or who need an intermediate official in the church. She is experienced enough to recognize the special needs of adventurers but her role in the church prevents her from giving in to extraordinarily strange demands. She could be the head of a new temple or an up-and-coming member of an established temple.

Ravel Dasinder (N male human cleric 18 of Boccob) is the high cleric of Boccob in the city of Greyhawk. Although very old (in his seventies), his mind is still clear and he is still in good health. His powers of divination are unequalled, and he has access to the knowledge of future events through his connection to the Lord of All Magics. He is a very powerful political figure, part of the Directing Oligarchy of the city, although he almost never interferes in its government. He uses his power to stave off threats to the city (which protects his temple and library) and is an ally of Mordenkainen (and by extension the Circle of Eight, although he dislikes at least one other member of the group and limits his communications to Mordenkainen).

Ravel is tall, with blue eyes, gray hair that is almost gone, a beaked nose, and thin lips. Quiet and studious, he speaks slowly and only after contemplating what is the best answer, a habit acquired after a lifetime of acquiring knowledge that could be dangerous in the wrong hands. Surprisingly for a Boccobite cleric, he dislikes temperate folk, welcoming cunning, deviousness, and even dishonesty, for these things can be noted and accounted for, while quiet people are more difficult to fathom (he of course is more than willing to use magic to discover what these folk are planning).

Ravel is a good contact for high-level adventurers in and around Greyhawk. He is busy enough that lesser members of the church rarely see him and this gives him an air of mystery and power that he accepts but doesn't flaunt. Anyone granted an audience with him must be very important to the church's plans in some way.

PLANAR ALLY

One of the better-known servants of Boccob is **Burning Eye** (N celestial will-o-wisp Sorcerer 6), a blue-and-silver flamelike creature with a single

staring eye floating in its center. It can change its color to violet or even red, and—like a *dancing lights* spell—can temporarily take the form of a manlike area of fire or even split into multiple flames like a bunch of torches (although these multiple flames cannot split apart to move into separate areas). All of its forms retain a staring eye at the center.

In addition to the powers of a celestial will-o-wisp with six levels of sorcerer, Burning Eye can create a *disk of concordant opposition* once per day as a 13th-level caster.

Burning Eyes is a strange and aloof creature, immune to emotional arguments and always considering the effect its actions on magic and the balance. The best way to get it to agree to something is to explain how the proper action benefits these things. When roused to anger it blazes brightly and wades into battle, smashing enemies with its shock attack, spells, and the *disk*, preferring to single out enemy spellcasters and magic creatures to best make use of its immunities to magic.

Although it lacks the strength to carry much (7 pounds is a heavy load), when called by a servant of the faith (requiring *planar ally* or a similar spell) it accepts magic items as payment, preferring wands for its own use, but otherwise asking for scrolls and other light items to hand over to other agents of Boccob. A donation of a *staff of power* counts as double its actual value for the purpose of buying Burning Eye's services, as does any item tied to the power of Tharizdun. The gift of a *staff of the magi* is enough to convince it of almost anything that isn't outright suicidal. Such donations are simply wisked away to be distributed later by other agents of the Lord of All Magics.

BURNING EYE

Celestial Advanced Will-O'-Wisp Sorcerer 6
Small Aberration (Air, Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 6d4+12d8+36 (105 hp)
Initiative: +15
Speed: Fly 50 ft. (perfect)
Armor Class: 35 (+1 size, +11 Dex, +9 deflection, +4 armor), touch 31, flat-footed 24
Base Attack/Grapple: +12/+3
Attack: Shock +24 melee touch (2d8 electricity)
Full Attack: Shock +24 melee touch (2d8 electricity)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Boccob's disk, smite evil 1/day, spells
Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., magic immunity, natural invisibility, resistance 10 (acid, electricity, and cold), DR 10/magic, SR23
Saves: Fort +8, Ref +17, Will +15
Abilities: Str 1, Dex 32, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 16
Skills: Bluff +18, Concentration +20, Diplomacy +19, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Listen +17, Search +12, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +15, Spot +17
Feats: Blind-Fight, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Practiced Spellcaster, Silent Spell, Sudden Empower, Weapon Finesse [B]
Challenge Rating: 11
Treasure: 10% coins, 50% goods, 50% items
Alignment: Neutral

Boccob's Disk (Sp): Burning Eye can create a *disk of concordant opposition* effect 1/day as a 13th-level caster to deal 13d6 damage (DC18 Fort half).

Magic Immunity (Ex): Immune to all spells and spell-like abilities which allow spell resistance, except for *magic missile* and *maze*.

Natural Invisibility (Ex): A will-o'-wisp can become invisible by extinguishing its glow.

Smite Evil (Su): A celestial creature can deal +18 extra damage with a melee attack against an evil foe 1/day.

Spells (6/7/6/4): As sorcerer, caster level 10th, DC13 + spell level. Spells known: 0th – *acid splash, detect magic, detect poison, ghost sound, mage hand, message, read magic*; 1st – *burning hands, mage armor* (already cast), *magic missile, shield*; 2nd – *scorching ray, see invisibility*; 3rd – *fireball*.

Planar Ally: A normal will-o'-wisp has 9 HD, so with 6 sorcerer levels, Burning Eye can be called with a *greater planar ally* spell (up to 18 HD), instead of a *planar ally* spell (up to 12 HD).

Sources: Practiced Spellcaster and Sudden Empower feats are from *Complete Arcane*. The latter allows it to empower a spell 1/day without increasing casting time or spell slot level.

STAFFS OF THE MAGI

Imbuing your Wizard's staff

by Ben Vandgrift
illustrated by Jeff Carlisle

The wizard's staff accompanies her everywhere, from the darkest dungeon to the loftiest royal audience chamber. It is a symbol of power, station, and an advertisement of the vanity of spellcasters. History, myth, and tradition demand its use as it alludes to mystical principles beyond the ken of the layman.

The image of a powerful magician, whether drawn from folklore, mythology, or contemporary literature, inevitably includes a staff. Although the satchel, spellbook, and pointy hat make frequent appearances, the staff serves as a constant companion to wielders of mystical might. Looking closer at this image, however, can add depth to spellcasting characters.

History, Myth, and Allusion

Beyond a certain point, history and mythology become interchangeable. The merger of these two concepts defines a realm from which our oldest and deepest images are drawn. The wizard's staff is no exception, as it draws from numerous sources both historical and mythological.

Shamanic: Tribal healers and medicine men—their histories notched in stone and painted on cave walls—are frequently depicted with a staff in hand. Likely, these renderings depicted a walking stick—age, wisdom, and infirmity intertwined into a single symbol. The profile stuck and became an integral part of the shamanic uniform.

By the fifth century, the staff's power was legend. Old Icelandic inscriptions speak of Runemal magicians carrying the "gandr," a rod rendering them invincible. The Saga of Erik the Red describes their magician as a woman carrying a knobbed staff. To the shaman, the staff was not only a statement of position and a sign of wisdom, but also a focus of power, a tool upon which to carve history and spellcraft, and a sympathetic representation of both the tree of life and the phallus. In eastern shamanistic traditions, the staff served as a representation of the spine chakras and was carried by wise wu jen.

Hermetic: From 2100 BCE, images appear of Egyptian ritual-leaders carrying magical staffs; enchanted finials depicting the gods perched atop. These were carried not only as marks of distinction, but also as the focus of the ritualist's power.

Hermes Trismegistus, the divine merger of the Egyptian Thoth and Greek Hermes, first appeared in these images. It is from Trismegistus and the treatises written in his name that the philosophical and practical Hermetic traditions sprang. His ever-present staff became—among other things—the caduceus (knotted serpents representing the entanglement of good and evil within the soul) and the Celtic cross. In the hermetic tradition, symbols are traced in the dust with the boot of the staff, as it is a conduit of magical energy grasped tightly by the mage's will.

Fantastic: Before the saga of Arthur, Merlin appears as Ambrosius, a seer conceived immaculately, and Myrddin, a wild forest prophet. Most Westerners are familiar with the image of the powerful trickster at Arthur's side,

with robe and staff handy. Merlin serves as the seminal "magician" archetype for fantastic literature.

The similarities are obvious between Merlin and Tolkien's Gandalf, for instance. In fact, all of the Istari had long beards, and each carried a staff—it was their distinguishing feature. To remove Saruman of Isengard from power, Gandalf broke the evil wizard's staff—not only destroying the seat of his authority, but shattering Saruman's conduit to magic itself.

In fantasy literature, more so than in traditional, staffs are themselves magic, rather than the staff being a representation of a mystical model. These devices of fantastic power can often be picked up even by a novice and wielded with terrible results.

Prophetic: The "Rod of Aaron," carried by both Aaron and Moses, was a sign of their divine authority in both the religious and kabalistic sense. It was this rod that parted the Red Sea, turned the rivers to blood, and drew water from the stone in the desert. It sprouted new leaves at Aaron's request, and was carried in the Ark of the Covenant.

In the Old Testament a rod or staff signified one of two things. As a warrior's or leader's rod, it represented power, strength, and occasionally wrath; it was the weapon by which God delivered judgment. As a shepherd's staff, it represented wisdom, leadership, mercy, and measure. Both sets of characteristics are embodied in the wizard.

These traditions and more have been distilled to form the essence of the wizard, hence the inseparability of the spellcaster and her staff. It is a measure of her power, wisdom, and mystical authority. When detailing your wizard character, consider carefully what her staff means to her mystically and how important it is to the workings of her craft.

Practical Uses

For the practicing wizard, the staff is indispensable. Not only is it an ornamented symbol of station, but a useful everyday tool.

Defense: While a staff is not a fancy or tricky weapon, it is practical and effective. It perfectly suits those who don't have time for martial training. Because it is a two-handed weapon, it brings more of the wielder's strength to bear and is difficult to disarm. It has a broad striking area and can be used equally well to jab. It is less likely to be peace-bound than a sword or other bladed weapon, and even the boldest of guards would think twice before confiscating the staff of a spellcaster.

Support: The quest for illumination frequently leads off the beaten path. Ask any hiker: a walking stick is a must. A staff provides support over rough and slippery terrain (+2 circumstance bonus on Balance skill checks), can be used as a lever for heavy objects and stuck doors (+2 circumstance bonus on Strength checks), and is always useful for gingerly poking something to see if it's (still) dead. At the very least, a staff is a long shaft of

wood, often mystically reinforced, and can be employed to hold open doors, keep apart trapped tomb walls, test a ceiling for soundness, and check the depth of a murky pool.

Image: If a magician's reputation doesn't precede her, a properly maintained staff serves as a warning to the ill-inclined. As part of an overall persona, a well-kept, imposing staff can intimidate most ne'er-do-wells into considering other marks. A pointed gesture of the staff can serve as warning, threat, and the preparation of a nasty surprise.

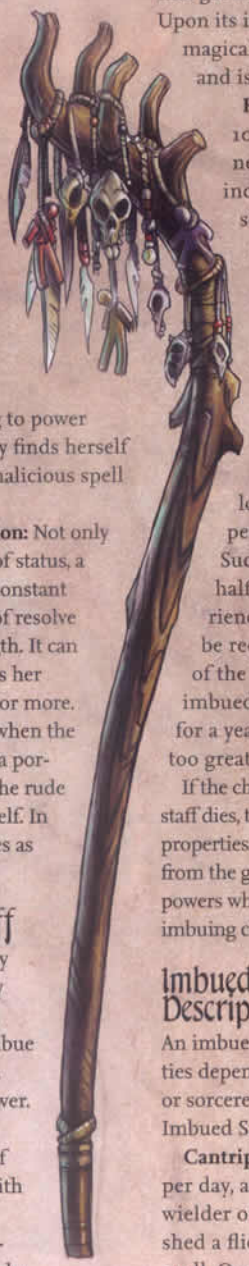
Keeping Up Appearances: Rarely does a wizard's staff fail to reflect her personality. Given the propensity for theatrics among most spellcasters, her choice of decoration is likely to amaze and mystify.

The overall impression the wizard wants to project can be enhanced by carefully choosing her staff's form. The madman of the woods carries a limb of knobby oak with the bark still attached and a grapevine spiraling up the length. The court vizier carries a long, enameled white rod topped with a giant pearl. A country enchanter prefers a thin and unassuming pole of ash. A wartime spell-smith will wrap steel bands around a shaft of ironwood. The right accessories can be as important as correct spell components.

Ornamentation: In addition to its basic shape, a staff may be ornamented even further. A hobgoblin wizard winds a string around the top, hung with left ears of all those he has defeated in magical duels. An advisor to a noble house might wrap his staff in the banner colors of his lord. A plains sorcerer marks his tribal heritage with the feathers of his ancestral totem. A staff can be festooned with quest trophies, reminders of battles past, or chalked-on recipes for chicken soup gathered from the outlying provinces. Choose carefully the things of significance to your character.

A Target: It must be said: putting on wizardly airs has its problems as well. Anyone carrying sufficiently mystical accessories must accept the consequences of being thought of as a magician. Those suspicious of magic will be harder to deal with. Carrying a staff into the wrong store might get prices doubled, and skilled rogues hungry for a big score could find a gem-encrusted cane a tempting target.

Perhaps the most significant danger comes from other spellcasters. The competitive nature of those with power often demands some challenge to settle the question: "Who has the most powerful staff?" An unsuspecting young apprentice pretending to power above her station likely finds herself on the sour end of a malicious spell or deadly duel.



A Familiar Companion: Not only a mere tool and mark of status, a wizard's staff can be a constant companion, a symbol of resolve and unwavering strength. It can mean as much to her as her traveling companions, or more. This is especially true when the magician has invested a portion of her spirit into the rude material of the staff itself. In this case, the staff serves as the wizard's familiar.

The Imbued Staff

As an optional rule, any sorcerer or wizard may opt to forego a normal familiar in order to imbue her traveling staff with that portion of her power. To do this, she selects a quarterstaff-length of wood that resonates with her mystical signature and personality. It cannot have been previously enchanted (although it may subsequently be) and must be of masterwork quality. It must be prepared using materials costing at least 500 gp, usually with a gem to serve as a mounted finial. The imbuing ritual takes 24 hours and ties a portion of the spellcaster's power into the staff, a separate piece of her soul that grows in power as she does. Upon its imbuing, the staff becomes magically linked to its creator and is treated as a magic item.

Hit Points: The staff has 10 Hit Points and Hardness 5, both of which increase as the wizard or sorcerer gains levels, according to the Imbued Staff Advancement table.

Saving Throws: The staff saves as its creator, even when unattended.

If an imbued staff is broken, its creator must attempt a DC 15 Fortitude saving throw or lose 500 experience points per wizard or sorcerer level. Success reduces the loss by half. However, a caster's experience point total can never be reduced below 0 as a result of the loss of her staff. A broken imbued staff cannot be replaced for a year and a day—the loss is too great.

If the character who imbued the staff dies, the staff loses all magical properties. Should the character return from the grave, it regains its imbued powers when it is first touched by the imbuing character.

Imbued Ability Descriptions

An imbued staff has special capabilities depending on its master's wizard or sorcerer level, as shown on the Imbued Staff Advancement table.

Cantrips (Sp): Three times per day, as a standard action, the wielder of the staff can make it shed a flickering *light* as per the spell. Once activated, this light remains until the wielder dismisses

it (a free action). In addition, the staff can hold a single cantrip available to the wielder, decided upon when it is first imbued. Once per day, as a standard action, the master can cast this cantrip from the staff. The caster level for these effects is equal to that of the master. The save DC for any cantrip cast by the staff is 10.

Deliver Touch Spells (Su): The master may deliver touch spells with the staff. When using the staff in this way, the wielder may attempt to deal the staff's damage by hitting the target's standard AC (as opposed to the target's touch AC). A successful critical hit with the staff does not double the spell's effect when delivered in this way.

Enhanced Weapon (Su): The staff gains the listed enhancement bonus to attack and damage when wielded by its master. This bonus applies to both ends of the staff. In the hands of any other it is merely an ordinary masterwork staff.

Remote Viewing (Su): The staff's master may concentrate and view the staff's surroundings as though looking through the finial. This effect is identical to that of *clairvoyance* except that it lasts for as long as the owner concentrates and has an infinite range so long as the staff is on the same plane. While in effect, the staff's finial glows faintly, illuminating the area around the staff like a candle.

Vital Transfer (Su): The staff's master may opt to forego her natural healing for the evening and mend her staff through mystical means. Each night's rest thus spent returns a number of hit points to the staff equal to the master's character level, up to the staff's maximum hit points. The Heal skill does not increase this amount.

Perfect Location (Su): By concentrating for a full round, the wizard knows the direction and distance to her staff, so long as it is on the same plane.

Mighty Weapon (Su): The staff gains the bane, defending, flaming, frost, merciful, shock, or thundering special weapon ability. This ability applies to both ends of the staff.

IMBUED STAFF ADVANCEMENT

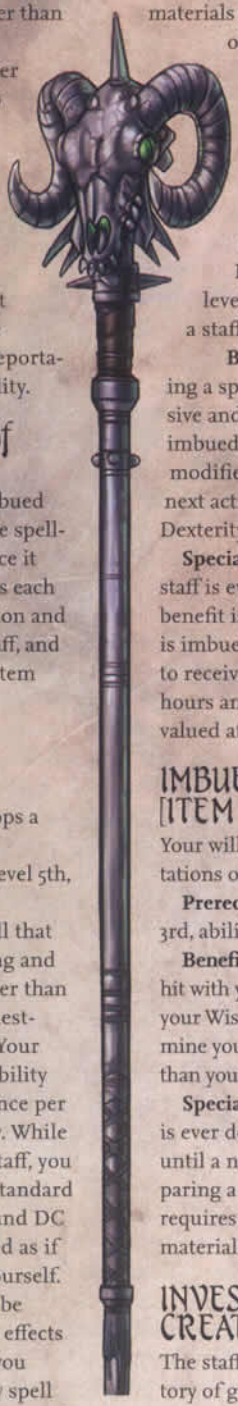
Master Class Level	Hardness	Hit Points	Special
1st–2nd	5	15	Cantrips, deliver touch spells
3rd–4th	5	15	Enhanced weapon +1
5th–6th	5	15	Remote viewing
7th–8th	10	20	—
9th–10th	10	20	Vital transfer
11th–12th	10	20	Enhanced weapon +2
13th–14th	15	25	Perfect location
15th–16th	15	25	Mighty weapon
17th–18th	15	25	Return
19th–20th	20	30	Enhanced weapon +3

BEHIND THE CURTAIN

Deciding to forego a traditional familiar in favor of an imbued staff isn't a simple choice. A staff can't move, communicate, or provide any help depending on these abilities. Its not intelligent and provides no company. It does not provide its owner with any skill bonuses or bonus feats. Its creation costs make it difficult for 1st-level characters to afford and the penalty for loss is also higher. Finally, by creating an imbued staff, a wizard decreases the likelihood that other magic staffs or weapons will be worth trading up to. These drawbacks are balanced by the guarantee that the staff's power will grow with the wizard's, and the possibility of increasing it further through various feats.

Once chosen, the bonus cannot be changed and does not function in the hands of anyone other than the staff's master.

Return (Su): The master can summon the staff to her hand as a standard action, so long as it is on the same plane. When summoned in this way, the staff simply appears in its master's hand. Any effect targeting the staff or the master that prevents teleportation also blocks this ability.



Invested Symbol of Power

Once a staff has been imbued with a wizard's power, the spellcaster can further enhance it through feats. These feats each require further preparation and ornamentation of the staff, and as such are classified as item creation feats.

ENCHANT STAFF [ITEM CREATION]

Your imbued staff develops a new power.

Prerequisites: Caster level 5th, ability to imbue a staff.

Benefit: Choose a spell that you are capable of casting and that is of a level no higher than one level below the highest-level spell you can cast. Your imbued staff gains the ability to grant you this spell once per day as a spell-like ability. While grasping your imbued staff, you may cast this spell as a standard action. The caster level and DC for this spell is calculated as if you had cast the spell yourself.

Special: This feat may be taken multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, select a new spell to add to your staff. If your imbued staff is ever destroyed, the use of these abilities is lost until a new staff is imbued. The ritual for preparing the staff to receive this feat requires 24 hours and expends materials valued at 100 gp per level of the spell to be invested.

IMBUED DEFENSE [ITEM CREATION]

Your staff protects its master, deflecting attacks targeting you.

Prerequisites: Caster level 1st, ability to imbue a staff.

Benefit: While casting a spell on the defensive and in contact with your imbued staff, add your Wisdom modifier to your AC until your next action, in addition to your Dexterity modifier.

Special: If your imbued staff is ever destroyed, this benefit is lost until a new staff is imbued. Preparing a staff to receive this feat requires 12 hours and expends materials valued at 500 gp.

IMBUED STRENGTH [ITEM CREATION]

Your will can overcome the limitations of your physical abilities.

Prerequisites: Caster level 3rd, ability to imbue a staff.

Benefit: When you successfully hit with your imbued staff, use your Wisdom modifier to determine your damage bonus, rather than your Strength modifier.

Special: If your imbued staff is ever destroyed, this feat is lost until a new staff is imbued. Preparing a staff to receive this feat requires 12 hours and expends materials valued at 500 gp.

INVEST SPELL [ITEM CREATION]

The staff you carry is a repository of great power.

Prerequisites: Caster level 9th, ability to imbue a staff.

Benefit: You permanently lose one of your arcane spell slots to invest an arcane spell of that level into your imbued staff. The spell invested must be one that you are able to cast and can be of a level no higher than 2 levels below the highest-level spell you can cast. Once imbued in this way, the spell chosen can be cast from the staff three times per day as a spell-like ability. Casting an invested spell in this way does not require any normal material components, but any XP cost or costly material components must still be paid. You must be in direct physical contact with your imbued staff to cast an invested spell.

This feat uses a spell slot equal to the level of the spell being invested, however, you may choose to modify the spell with any metamagic feat you know and adjust the spell's level and slot accordingly. The caster level and DC for an invested spell is calculated as if you cast the spell.

Special: This feat may be taken multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, select a new spell to invest. If the imbued staff is ever destroyed, the use of this ability is lost until a new staff is imbued. The ritual for preparing the staff to receive this feat requires 24 hours, and expends materials valued at 250 gp per level of the spell to be invested.

RECHARGE STAFF [ITEM CREATION]

You have the ability to transfer your arcane power into your imbued staff, recharging it.

Prerequisites: Caster level 12th, Craft Staff, ability to imbue a staff

Benefit: You may, as a standard action, expend any of your prepared spells or unused spell slots to add charges to your imbued staff. For every five spell levels expended in this way, add one charge to your imbued

staff. Cantrips cannot be expended in this way. Your imbued staff must be enchanted with spells that consume charges for this feat to have any effect. Your staff cannot exceed 50 charges through this ability.

Special: If the imbued staff is ever destroyed, the ability to use this feat is lost until a new staff is imbued.

Crafting a Staff

In general, creating a magical staff should be a labor of love for a wizard. Even if it is not imbued, the connection between wizard and staff is very strong. A staff created with the Craft Staff feat isn't something likely to be produced in quantity—each staff is a unique work of mystical and mundane art.

Take care to insure that a staff's powers are closely related and work together. Choose related concepts: shadow and fear, or water and ice, for example. Use the sample staffs on page 243 the *Dungeon Master's Guide* and the article "Staffs of Power" from *Dungeon* #127 for inspiration. Once the concept is secure, work with your DM to define building materials embodying the essence of the powers your staff will hold. A staff containing the spells *enervation* and *shadow walk* for instance might require the collection of a rose that died while in the shadow of a vampire. A staff for controlling treants could require the collection and compositing of wood from each type of tree in a forest.

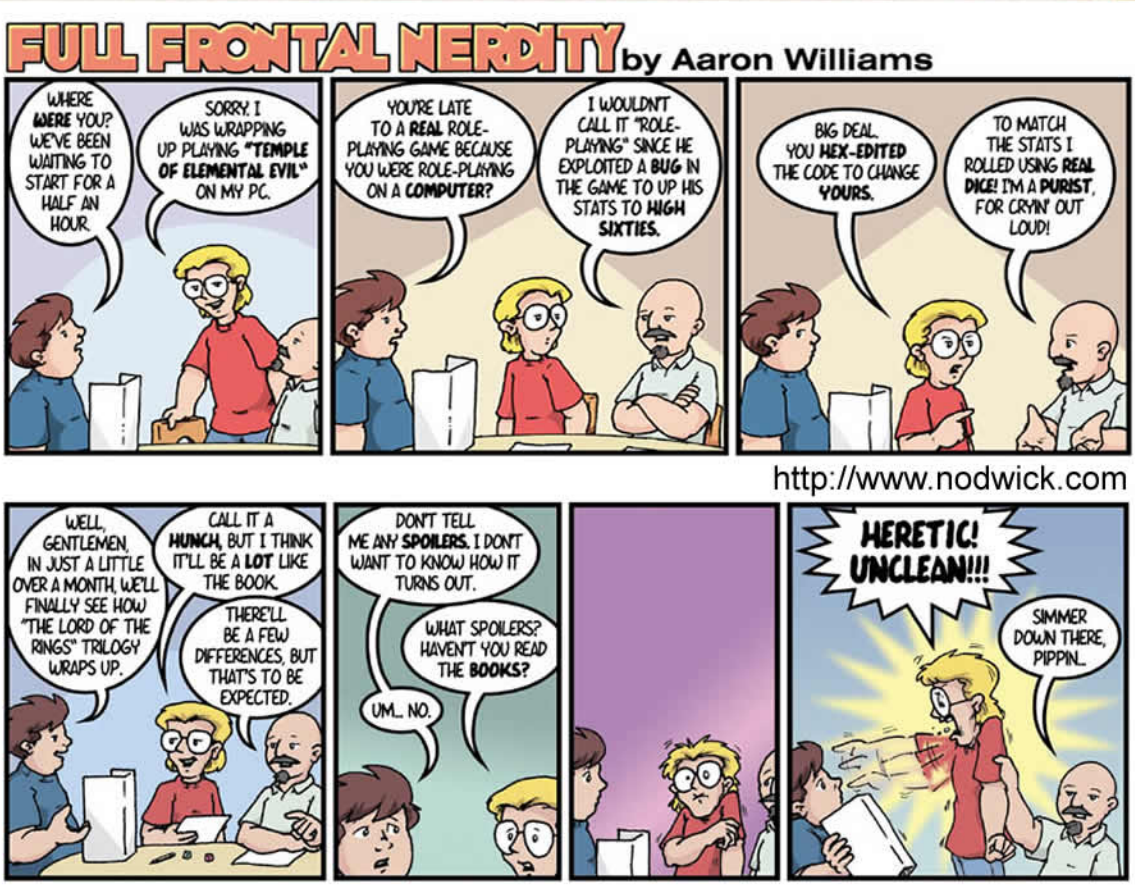
Even while you are working out the gold and experience costs with your Dungeon Master, bear in mind that the staff is more than just its power—it is likely to be the most challenging endeavor of a character's career.

Enhancing an Imbued Staff

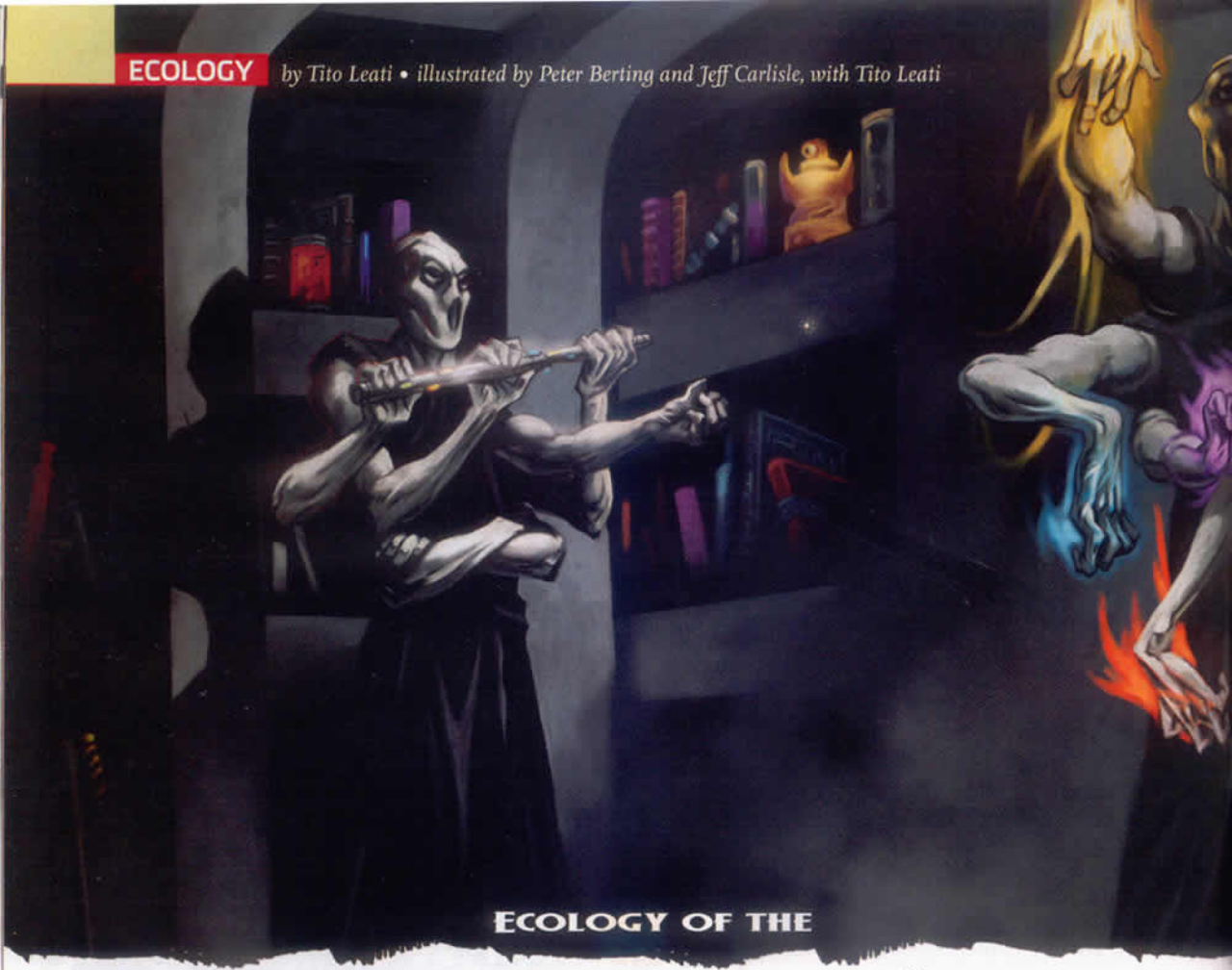
A wizard with the Craft Staff feat wishing to add powers to her imbued staff as if it were a normal staff (*Dungeon Master's Guide* page 287) may do so, however all costs associated with its creation are increased by 20%. This reflects the difficulty in overlaying the newer abilities with the existing powers. A staff crafted in this manner is created with 50 charges. It retains any imbued powers and its magical nature, even after the charges are expended.

Conclusion

There are many options for a wizard and her staff, a few of which are presented here. Spend some time reflecting on your wizard's relationship with the archetypes of old, and how she views this most vital accoutrement. Consider carefully the wood, the shape, and the ornamentation of her staff, as it will likely be the first thing other characters in her world notice, and will naturally reflect the caster's personality. It is the details that give any character life—your wizard, her life, and her description are only as rich as you make them.


FULL FRONTAL NERDITY by Aaron Williams
WHERE WERE YOU? WE'VE BEEN WAITING TO START FOR A HALF AN HOUR.
SORRY. I WAS WRAPPING UP PLAYING "TEMPLE OF ELEMENTAL EVIL" ON MY PC.
YOU'RE LATE TO A REAL ROLE-PLAYING GAME BECAUSE YOU WERE ROLE-PLAYING ON A COMPUTER?
I WOULDN'T CALL IT "ROLE-PLAYING" SINCE HE EXPLOITED A BUG IN THE GAME TO UP HIS STATS TO HIGH SIXTIES.
BIG DEAL. YOU HEX-EDITED THE CODE TO CHANGE YOURS.
TO MATCH THE STATS I ROLLED USING REAL DICE! I'M A PURIST, FOR CRYIN' OUT LOUD!
http://www.nodwick.com
WELL, GENTLEMEN, IN JUST A LITTLE OVER A MONTH, WE'LL FINALLY SEE HOW "THE LORD OF THE RINGS" TRILOGY WRAPS UP.
CALL IT A HUNCH, BUT I THINK IT'LL BE A LOT LIKE THE BOOK.
THERE'LL BE A FEW DIFFERENCES, BUT THAT'S TO BE EXPECTED.
DON'T TELL ME ANY SPOILERS. I DON'T WANT TO KNOW HOW IT TURNS OUT.
WHAT SPOILERS? HAVEN'T YOU READ THE BOOKS?
UM... NO.
HERETIC! UNCLEAN!!!
SIMMER DOWN THERE, PIPPIN...

by Tito Leati • illustrated by Peter Berting and Jeff Carlisle, with Tito Leati



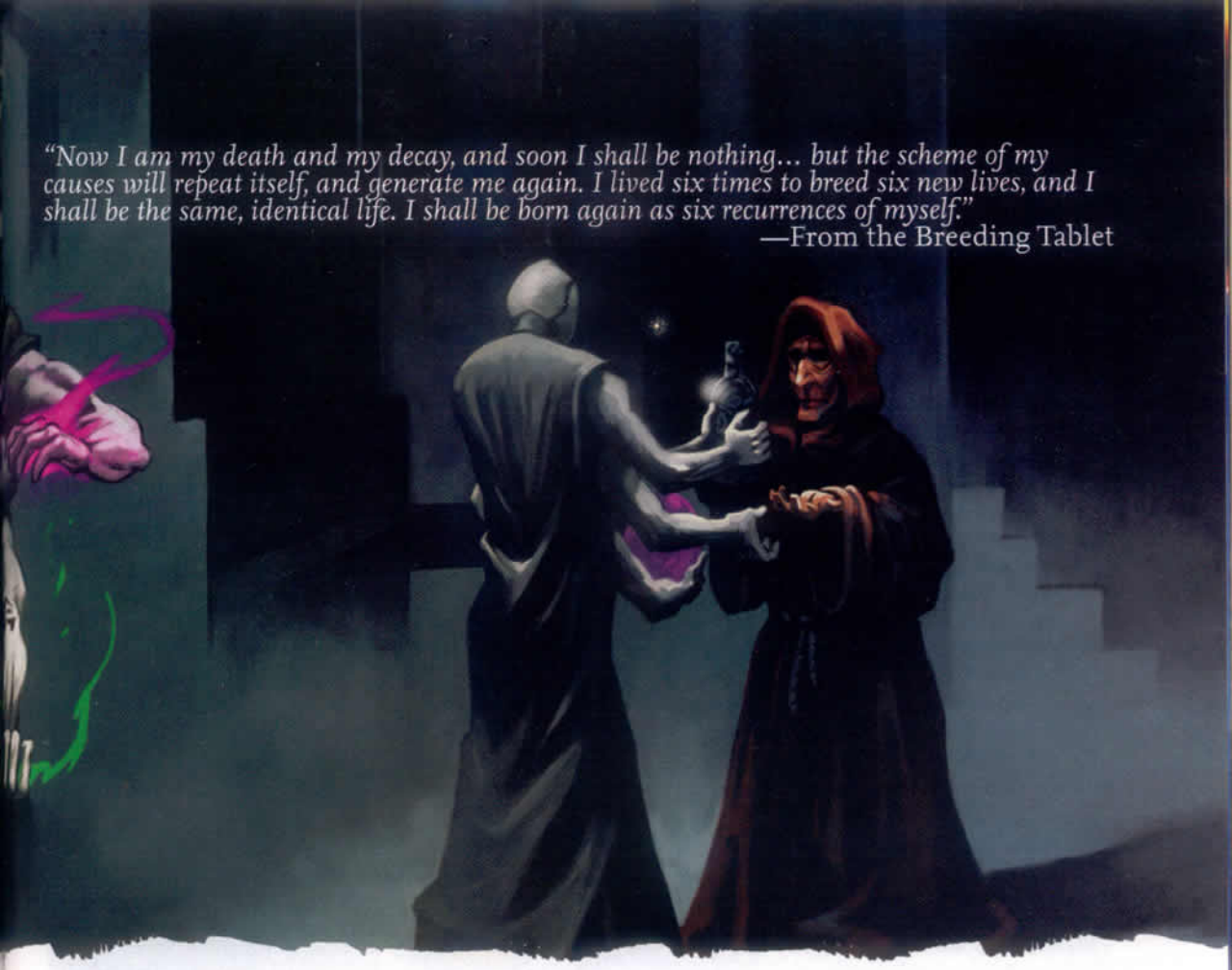
ECOLOGY OF THE SPELL WEAVER

Magic is the birthright of many creatures; powers in excess of most mortals' abilities that seem to grant them dominion over lesser races. Dragons, beholders, titans: these beings all manipulate the world through magical might, but none hold mastery over and refine their powers to the degree of the enigmatic and elusive spell weavers. Natural sorcerers, as potent as they are alien, spell weavers are the orphans of an ancient empire, ruined seemingly by happenstance. Collectors, traders, and instigators, spell weavers ever seek a way to reshape the present, which has perhaps gone terribly wrong.

HISTORY OF THE SPELL WEAVER

Only seen on rare occasions, and always because of their involvement in some scheme to obtain magic items by trade, persuasion, or force, spell weavers are a mysterious race of powerful sorcerers. These elusive beings evidence the last descendants of an ancient, magically advanced empire that, millennia ago, spanned numerous worlds and planes.

In this forgotten time, the spell weaver empire consisted of a vast league of colonies, called nodes, which spanned the multiverse. Huge pyramids of stone and steel powered


"Now I am my death and my decay, and soon I shall be nothing... but the scheme of my causes will repeat itself, and generate me again. I lived six times to breed six new lives, and I shall be the same, identical life. I shall be born again as six recurrences of myself."
—From the Breeding Tablet

by gigantic magical furnaces, these nodes were widely separated, often with only one existing on any single world or plane of existence. All of them, however, connected to one another through a complex matrix of magical portals. Thus, each node served as a huge planar travel installation, capable even of instantly moving with all of its inhabitants to other locations or planes.

The so-called spell weaver empire was largely a noninvasive one—an advanced community of intellectual watchers who only occasionally subjugated more primitive creatures to carry out menial chores and hard labor. What few races they encountered that posed threats the spell weavers gifted with powerful magic items and artifacts, allowing these cultures to destroy themselves from within (an act some spell weavers still practice in modern times). Yet, above all, the spell weavers were interested in semantics, a subject they had researched for thousands of years, traveling through the multiverse to meet and observe nearly every culture imaginable. Through the tireless study and practice of innumerable symbol and language codes, the spell weavers learned to avail themselves of their physical attributes and natural talents like no other race, developing an uncanny telepathy and the ability to cast multiple spells at once.

Few know if the spell weaver plan to acquire total knowledge of all existing communication was their ultimate goal or if they had some other purpose. What is known is that, at the height of their prosperity, the spell weavers conducted a grandiose and dangerous experiment, possibly an attempt to alter reality across the entire multiverse. This experiment, however, met with tragic failure and caused a catastrophe of colossal proportions. For unexplained reasons, the furnaces within every spell weaver node exploded one after the other in a terrible chain reaction, obliterating the pyramidal colonies and all their inhabitants within seconds, effectively purging the multiverse of the spell weaver empire in a single moment. Only the few members of the race who were away from the nodes survived, becoming the ancestors of all modern spell weavers.

PHYSIOLOGY OF THE SPELL WEAVER

Averaging 5 feet in height and 100 pounds, spell weavers are six-armed alien-looking creatures. Their genderless bodies are smooth and hairless, varying between numerous shades of gray and occasionally splotched or speckled with light colors such as beige, pink, or yellow. Their necks are long and exceptionally nimble, allow-

ing spell weavers to turn their heads completely around with no effort. Further adding to their alien nature, spell weaver blood is metallic blue in color, similar to quicksilver.

All spell weavers carry chromatic disks, thin, 6-inch-diameter circular objects made of a silvery substance that is stronger than steel. At a spell weaver's will, the disk can change color and show a variety of patterns and designs on its dark surface. These objects are intimate creations of spell weavers, actual living extensions of their beings. In the rare case that a chromatic disk is lost or destroyed, a spell weaver can quickly replace it through meditation, exuding blood and fluids from the palm of its hands in the form of a metallic resin. The resin is manipulated to form the disk shape and solidifies quickly. This process takes only an hour but leaves the spell weaver exhausted.

Spell weavers are extremely long-lived creatures, with a lifespan near six centuries. Age does not seem to significantly affect their physical abilities, and only lighter skin tones distinguish older individuals from younger ones. Aging, however, is directly tied to reproduction for spell weavers in a complex and mysterious pair of rituals.

Upon reaching the end of its life—a time spell weavers seem to instinctually know—an elder spell weaver can rejuvenate its body through a special hibernation trance requiring the draining of a near-priceless amount of magic items. In preparation, the spell weaver sacrifices the energies within its accumulated magic treasures, destroying them to create a cylindrical "coffin." It then finds a secure location, as the rite leaves it effectively helpless for the trance's entire duration. Upon sealing itself within the coffin, the spell weaver enters a state of suspended animation from which it cannot be awakened. This process usually takes only a month, but sometimes lasts far longer, with evidence of spell weavers languishing within their coffins for centuries at a time. At the end of this ritual, the spell weaver is physically restored, its skin darkened and its life renewed for another six centuries. This restorative process only seems to function for spell weavers, yet even so they keep its specifics a mystery from all other races. This trance only functions six times, providing no benefit beyond that. Despite their lengthy lifespans and these renewing trances, however, spell weavers are far from immortal.

To reproduce—an act that is for spell weavers little more than a final act of self-regeneration—an elder specimen who has gone through all six rejuvenation processes may perform a complex, ritual self-sacrifice that results in the "birth" of six new adult spell weavers. The rite requires a special array of breeding vessels found only in a few rare spell weaver sites. To perform the ceremony, the parent creates six new chromatic disks and places them into the vessels where the new individuals form and grow in a few hours. During that time, the parent dies and decays, eventually disappearing into nothingness. The newborn spell weavers rise from the vessels with the full memories and mental abilities of the parent.

Spell weavers do not speak, for their law forbade speech millennia ago as part of the training to develop their telepathic faculties. They seldom emit noises, and only as a consequence. When they suffer pain, for example, they might squeal or grunt in a high-pitched tone, but nothing more. Spell weavers have their own incredibly complex language of clicks and whistles, which they know only from distant memories. In modern times, the spell weaver language is experienced only in its written form, as node hieroglyphs.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE SPELL WEAVER

The following table shows the results of a Knowledge (nature) check related to spell weavers. Those most likely to know such information are the few people who have researched the ancient spell weaver empire or have knowingly done business with them. Other sources of information might also exist near the site of a node's destruction, wastelands usually marked by a crater or rift of some sort.

As spell weavers are an extremely rare race, Knowledge checks resulting in less than DC 15 reveal no information about them. Also, considering their ancientness and magical aptitude, DMs might wish to change the skill check required to learn about spell weavers from the standard for monstrous humanoids—Knowledge (nature)—to Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (history).

Knowledge (nature)

DC	Result
15	Spell weavers are exotic, six-armed sorcerers who constantly search for magic items.
20	Spell weavers are silent and aloof creatures. They sometimes enslave physically powerful monsters to serve them. Spell weavers excel in magical combat and can sling many spells simultaneously.
25	Spell weavers are powerful telepaths, although they seem to shun contact with all but their own kind. Part of spell weaver communication relies on the shifting colors of their strange chromatic disks.
30	Spell weavers can rejuvenate themselves multiple times, each potentially living multiple lives. New spell weavers are spawned through a complex ritual in which an elder spell weaver dies.
35	The telepathic powers of spell weavers includes the ability to read the "memories" of certain magical objects. Their race-wide search for such items is likely tied to some greater, mysterious purpose.

PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIETY OF THE SPELL WEAVER

Although they still comply with the dogmatic prohibition not to speak, modern spell weavers are free from the rigid social structure of their ancient empire. Sometimes a few individuals band together to pursue the common goal of acquiring magic items, but most members of the race are essentially loners.

Spell weavers have two complementary ways to communicate exclusively among themselves—a sign language that makes use of their flexible neck and six hands and a visual language based on the colors of their chromatic disks. Both of these communication methods can convey very complex and articulate meanings, and are totally incomprehensible to other races. They are not redundant, though, for through the combination of sign language, chromatic disks, and telepathy, spell weavers can deliver hours of explanation and dialogue in a few minutes.

Spell weavers have no religion and actively shun the worship of deities, refuting these beings' divinity and mysteriously hinting at some undermining secret of their powers. Despite this disbelief, spell weavers do revere their ancestors and often meditate to better understand the will of past generations. As all spell weavers share the memories of their forebearers, this spirituality is less like actual devotion and more a kind of pious reminiscence.

During these recollections, spell weavers often recall the Time of Nodes, the golden age of their race when their pyramidal cities still existed. They refer to the catastrophe that wiped out their empire as the Disjunction, and the following age, up to the present day, as the Scrabbling. In the hopes of restoring this Time of Nodes, spell weavers seek out particular magic items or, more specifically, ancient gems imbued with "memories" that spell weavers can telepathically read. By inspecting these rare and specific gems, many spell weavers try to collect pieces of what they call the Code of Reversion, a magical formula devised before the final experiment that destroyed the spell weaver empire. The pieces of the formula were psychometrically inscribed on a series of precious stones for security reasons, and distributed in multiple copies to different keepers throughout the empire. Any spell weaver could activate the formula, but it had to read and memorize all the pieces first. The Code of Reversion essentially formed an incredibly powerful multipart spell, designed to revert time in the entire multiverse to the point when the formula was inscribed. Aware of the risks involved in their final experiment, the spell weavers devised the Code of Reversion as a chance to restore their empire if something went wrong. The catastrophe, however, exceeded their worst expectations, and the inscribed gems were scattered and lost. As such, no spell weaver has yet been able to locate and perform the Code of Reversion. Even the spell weavers are not sure if a complete copy of the formula has survived, and most gems suffer gaps in their memory that cannot be filled. Needless to say, the successful activation of the Code of Reversion would inevitably mean the erasure of thousands of years of history and the effective annihilation of all present things.

Not all spell weavers obsess over the past, however. While some accept the

The tablet illustrates the spell weaver breeding
Top Left - a spell weaver goes through his six
(numbered with the canonic senary numerals)
Top Right - the elder spell weaver produces six
disks and places them into as many breeding vessels
the disks shine in the middle of the vessels.
as spell weaver embryos develop overhead:
the frontal position of the elder spell weaver signifies
Bottom Left - the newborn spell weaver
(their life cycle marked "zure") are grown to full adults.
NODE NUMBERS
SPELL WEAVER NUMERALS
SAMPLE NUMBERS
CRADLEDAY SPELL WEAVER
SPELL WEAVER/NORRA
COMMON
37
1243
378
NODE HIEROGLYPHS
SAMPLE CYPHER TRANSCRIPT
This phonetic transcript is part of the results of a
comprehend languages spell cast on a spell weaver tablet.
The results change from tablet to tablet, however, and
interpreting the text is always a matter of intuition and luck.
The language of the tablets seems to imply a system of
encoding patterns stored in the brain,
which are perfectly natural to spell weavers,
but totally alien to other creatures.

NODE HIEROGLYPHS

The node-dwelling spell weavers of ancient times used special hieroglyphs to record the specifics of their lives, their travels, and their research. Since most spell weaver tablets date to this Time of Nodes, they are often blackened and badly damaged. The spell weavers of modern times rarely use node hieroglyphs, but can still understand them perfectly. The hieroglyphs can be read aloud with spells like *comprehend languages*, but the text is encoded in a way that its literal translation inevitably reveals nonsense to non-spell weavers. To successfully make sense of the text, a reader must succeed at a DC 25 Decipher Script check in conjunction with *comprehend languages*.

Spell weavers sometimes illustrated their tablets with simple line block drawings. The tablet presented here is the Breeding Tablet, one of the most famous spell weaver documents ever discovered. It shows the sequence of a spell weaver's six-life cycle and its final self-sacrifice.

ruin of their civilization and attempt to live peacefully, others strive to rebuild the spell weaver empire. To them, the greatest impediment to renewed spell weaver mastery is the world's infestation by innumerable humanoid races, which dominate it through their verminous fecundity alone. Hearkening back to offensive strategies utilized during the Time of Nodes, these spell weavers are all too glad to supply such races with the instruments of their annihilation.

THE DISJUNCTION

No spell weaver or researcher from any other race knows what accident caused the ruin of the spell weaver empire and brought about the end of the Time of Nodes. While spell weavers acknowledge that their leaders were attempting some far-reaching magical feat, they remain universally secretive of its specifics. Two commonly held possibilities follow:

Ascension: Through their study of language, spell weavers discovered the prime form of communication, words of reality capable of manipulating all existence. Revealing that deities were little more than bickering entities with knowledge of this language, the spell weavers attempted to take their place among the powers en masse. Their intentions discovered by the existing deities, these covetous beings warped the spell weavers' attempt to elevate the population of an entire node, creating a magical backlash that rippled through and destroyed the spell weaver empire, along with all knowledge of the prime language.

Unification: Spell weavers came to believe that, at the beginning of creation, all of the planes and countless worlds were in fact one single, balanced reality. This equilibrium, however, was shattered by the mercurial whims of the deities. Traveling to all of these fragmented existences and creating their nodes as anchors, the spell weavers hoped to cast a multiverse-spanning spell capable of drawing the shattered planes back together. The power of infinite infini-

NODE NUMBERS

Numbers—especially the number six—are sacred to spell weavers, and they have a senary numerical system. Spell weavers also have a decimal system, developed to cooperate with the nerra (the enigmatic rulers of the Plane of Mirrors; see page 127 of the *Fiend Folio*) at some point of their history. The purpose of this cooperation was the construction of a mirror-based, short-range teleportation device. This device consisted of several pentagonal gates that connected spell weaver nodes with selected locations in the surrounding areas. Successful transit through the gates was achieved by navigating through a maze of extradimensional rooms, using a numerical code for direction (see the *Shackled City Adventure Path* for more on this and other spell weaver artifacts).

LEGENDARY SPELL WEAVER ELDER

Advanced Spell Weaver of Legend Archmage 3
Medium Outsider (Augmented Monstrous Humanoid, Native)

Hit Dice: 3d4+30d8+198 (340 hp)
Initiative: +13
Speed: 30 ft.
Armor Class: 38 (+9 Dex, +10 natural, +6 armor, +2 deflection, +1 insight), touch 22, flat-footed 29
Base Attack/Grapple: +31/+34
Attack: Slam +34 melee (1d6+3)
Full Attack: 2 slams +34 melee (1d6+3)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Frightful presence, spell-like abilities, spells
Special Qualities: Arcane reach 30 ft., chromatic disk, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 5, fire resistance 10, immune to mind-affecting effects, mastery of elements, mastery of shaping, reflective hide, shielded mind, spell weaving, SR32, telepathy
Saves: Fort +20, Ref +30, Will +27
Abilities: Str 17, Dex 28, Con 23, Int 22, Wis 19, Cha 32
Skills: Concentration +26, Diplomacy +23, Knowledge (arcana) +37, Knowledge (planes) +15, Listen +20, Move Silently +20, Sense Motive +20, Spellcraft +48, Spot +37, Tumble +15, Use Magic Device +44
Feats: Empower Spell, Improved Initiative (B), Maximize Spell, Quicken Spell, Skill Focus (spellcraft), Spell Focus (conjuration), Spell Focus (evocation), Still Spell
Epic Feats: Automatic Quicken Spell (0-3), Epic Spellcasting, Improved Metamagic, Multispell (x2)
Challenge Rating: 21
Treasure: Ring of protection +2, ring of minor fire resistance, dusty rose ioun stone, cloak of charisma +2, gloves of dexterity +2, amulet of health +2, wand of cure serious wounds
Alignment: Usually neutral

Frightful Presence (Ex): All creatures within 20 ft. must make a DC36 Will save or become shaken for as long as they stay within 20 ft. Creatures with 30 HD or more are immune.

Reflective Hide (Su): This monster of legend has a permanent *spell turning* effect.

Spell-like Abilities: Always active – *see invisibility*; at will – *detect magic, invisibility*; 1/day – *plane shift*. CL35.

Spells (6/999/887/767/3): As 35th-level sorcerer, DC21 + spell level +1 for evocation and conjuration spells (*). It can cast 3 epic spells per day. It can cast 3 quickened spells per round (excluding spell weaving) and all 0th-3rd level spells are automatically quickened. All metamagic spell level adjustments are reduced by 1 (min. +1).
Typical Known Spells: 0th – *acid splash**, *detect poison, read magic, dancing lights**, *ray of frost**, *ghost sound, mage hand, message, open/close*; 1st – *burning hands**, *magic missile**, *obscuring mist**, *ray of enfeeblement, shield*; 2nd – *locate object, hideous laughter, mirror image, touch of idiocy, scorching ray**; 3rd – *greater mage armor** *(already cast), fireball**, *fly, suggestion*; 4th – *locate creature, charm monster, fire shield**, *greater invisibility*; 5th – *cone of cold**, *feeble mind, teleport**, *wall of force**; 6th – *chain lightning**, *disintegrate, greater dispel magic*; 7th – *finger of death, force cage**, *mage's sword**; 8th – *maze**, *polar ray**, *trap the soul**; 9th – *gate**, *meteor swarm**, *time stop*; Epic – *let go of me, lord of nightmares**, *ruin*.

For other spell weaver abilities, see the following page. High arcana abilities are detailed in DMG.

BATTLE WEAVER

Some spell weavers train themselves to make use of an extra pair of hands in combat.

Prerequisites: Spell weaver, Str 15.

Benefit: Spell weavers with this feat gain two additional slam attacks. These additional attacks are primary attacks and have the same attack bonus as the spell weaver's other slam attacks.

Normal: Spell weavers can normally only make two slam attacks.

Special: A spell weaver can take this feat twice, allowing it to make use of all six arms in combat. This feat makes spell weavers eligible for the Multiweapon Fighting feat (see page 304 of the *Monster Manual*).

ADVANCED SPELL WEAVER

Seeking to master greater magic, most spell weavers advance as sorcerers or wizards, making the archmage or nearly any prestige class from *Complete Arcane* natural paths for many. Adhering to a strict atheism, spell weavers never advance as clerics. More martially minded spell weavers benefit greatly from the eldritch knight and spellsword (see *Complete Warrior*) prestige classes.

SCHAVRA **CR 12**

Spell weaver fighter 4

N Medium monstrous humanoid

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Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., telepathy; Listen +11, Spot +11

AC 27, touch 12, flat-footed 25

hp 85 (14 HD)

SR 21

Immune mind-affecting effects

Fort +8, **Ref** +9, **Will** +14

Spd 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee *+2 spell storing longsword* +15/+10/+5 (2d6+6/18–20) and 3 *+1 longswords* +14 (2d6+5/18–20)

Base Atk +14; **Grp** +16

Special Attack spell-like abilities, spells

Combat Gear *potion of bull's strength*

Spells Known (CL 16th, ranged touch +16):

6th (5/day)—*chain lightning* (DC 20), *wall of iron*

5th (6/day)—*cone of cold* (DC 19), *prying eyes, telekinesis*

4th (6/day)—*confusion* (DC 17), *dimension door, fire shield, stone skin*

3rd (6/day)—*dispel magic, fly, haste, rage*

2nd (6/day)—*alter self, blur, web* (DC 15), *resist energy, scorching ray* (DC 16)

1st (6/day)—*burning hands* (DC 15), *identify, jump, magic missile, shield*

0 (6/day)—*dancing lights, detect magic, flare, light, mage hand, message, ray of frost, touch of fatigue* (DC 13), *resistance*

Spell-like Abilities (CL 16th):

Always active—*see invisibility*

At will—*detect magic, invisibility*

1/day—*plane shift*

Abilities Str 14, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 20, Wis 19, Cha 16

SQ chromatic disk, immunity to mind effects, shielded mind, spell weaving

Feats Battle Weaver, Empower Spell, Enlarge Spell, Extend Spell, Heighten Spell, Multiweapon Fighting, Spell Focus (abjuration), Spell Focus (evocation), Spell Penetration, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (long sword)

Skills Climb +12, Intimidate +15, Jump +10, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (history) +15, Knowledge (religion) +10, Knowledge (the planes) +15, Listen +13, Search +9, Spellcraft +19, Spot +14, Use Magic Device +14

Possessions *+4 mithral shirt, +2 spell storing longsword, 3 +1 longswords, amulet of natural armor +2*, chromatic disk, backpack

Chromatic Disk: Schavra's chromatic disk holds ten additional spell levels of energy. By holding the disk in one hand the spell weaver can cast a spell that it knows and expend spell levels from the disk rather than from its number of spell slots

Shielded Mind (Ex): Shavra's mind cannot be read by any means. Those that try must make a DC 17 Will save or be *confused* for 1d6 days.

Spell Weaving (Ex): Shavra can cast multiple spells at a time as long as the sum of their spell levels are equal to or less than the number of hands it has free.

Telepathy (Su): In addition to the basic effects of telepathy, Shavra can communicate by thought with any other spell weaver within 1,000 miles.

ties proved too great for even the bold spell weavers, though, and their first trial wiped their empire from the reality they hoped to save.

SPELL WEAVER RUINS

Ravaged by the Disjunction, the ruins of spell weaver nodes are thousands of years old—relics of an empire lost to time. Extraordinarily scarce, multiple nodes rarely exist on a single world and never on the same continent.

Every node has a similar structure, with a main pyramid that towers more than 500 feet tall. At the top perches a great crystal lamp once capable of illuminating the surrounding landscape with a pulsing azure light. With all probability, these lamps acted as a magical homing beacon for other spell weaver planar travel facilities.

Inside, the most important room of any node was the breeding chamber, the home of the magic cylinders necessary for spell weavers to reproduce. Only a few of these rooms survived the Disjunction intact, and they are desperately sought out and jealously guarded by modern spell weavers. Secondary to the breeding chamber was the mortuary, a many-floored hall that protected spell weavers undergoing their rejuvenating stasis. Deeper than these rooms slept the heart of the node, a gigantic magical furnace. While those in every node ever discovered have been destroyed, an active spell weaver furnace is capable of producing effects on par with the powers of the deities. As such, spell weavers throughout the planes dream of finding a near-mythic live node furnace.

In the FORGOTTEN REALMS, the Tortured Lands and the Fallen Lands both make likely spots for spell weaver ruins. In EBERRON, a spell weaver node might appear somewhere in the Demon Wastes or deep within mysterious Xen'drik. The *Shackled City Adventure Path* and the adventure "The Spire of Long Shadows," in DUNGEON #130, also suggest further spell weaver plots and designs.

AGE OF WORMS

by James Jacobs • illustrated by Eva Widermann

Wormfood

Surviving the Age of Worms Adventure Path

The Wormhunter

While the pages of *Dungeon* present everything a DM needs to run the Age of Worms Adventure Path, every month *Dragon* gives the players of that—or any other campaign—tools to enhance their gaming experience.

This month we look at a highly specialized prestige class—the wormhunter. The design philosophy behind this prestige class is somewhat different from other prestige classes you might have seen in these pages. Usually, a prestige class serves two major functions. First, it gives a player options to specialize his character and set him apart from other characters who might have the same standard class. Second, a prestige class is an excellent way to bring the flavor of a specific campaign world to the forefront of a game. It's one thing to play a bard in the Forgotten Realms, but it's quite another to join an organization like the Harpers.

The wormhunter is a different kind of creature—it isn't spawned from a specific campaign world as much as it is from a specific campaign: The Age of Worms. As a result, its prerequisites and abilities can be far more specialized and focused than those of most prestige classes. For a player of the Age of Worms Adventure Path, taking levels of wormhunter can reflect how the events in this campaign have directly influenced and affected your character while at the same time giving him an edge against the most common enemies he'll be fighting in the future. Just remember that if you choose to fight fire with fire, you could get burned.

The Wormhunter

The spawn of Kyuss derive their power from the worm. The worm is their link to divinity, the source of their supernatural powers, and the means of their propagation. It is, in the absence of anything similar within their rotted frames, their soul. Without the worm, they are nothing.

Many before have turned to these strange and dangerous green worms, seeking knowledge or power. How is it that such a small thing can cause such great devastation, such unholy ruin in even the holiest of men? Those who find themselves confronting the spawn of Kyuss are frequently forced to adapt, to develop specialized techniques against these dangerous foes. The spawn of Kyuss are not without their weaknesses. Their link to the worm can be ruined by magic that cleanses curses and disease. Their stumbling gait and unarmored bodies make them relatively easy to hit. And beyond a range of 10 feet, they're relatively harmless (provided you can resist the aura of palpable fear that surrounds them). Yet the spawn of Kyuss are merely the foot soldiers in a vast undead army. There exist far more powerful minions in the dark corners of the world, creatures closer to Kyuss and thus far more dangerous. (See the "Ecology of the Spawn of Kyuss" in *Dragon* #336.)

Fortunately, the lore of Kyuss can be tapped by those willing to risk a portion of their sanity in exchange for insight into the workings of the worm. A character who survives the worm's caress is never wholly the same thereafter. The scars might heal, but as the worm gnaws upon the brain of a host, it leaves behind part if itself. Memories, emotions, and fragments of knowledge that have sloughed off of Kyuss' vast intellect find their way into the minds of these beings. Certain rare texts like *Libris Mortis* and the *Necronomicon* call these souls the wormtouched. Often, their dreams are haunted by these memories. In the worst cases, a victim eventually spirals into insanity.

Yet there is a way to focus these memories. By studying not only the lore surrounding Kyuss and his spawn, but also the words he and his priests have recorded in a blasphemous set of texts called the *Apostolic Scrolls*, some of the wormtouched can draw upon these memories and turn them back on the source. They can even draw directly upon new worms of Kyuss, absorbing them into their bodies and minds, refining their alien memories to unlock potent abilities of their own. Unfortunately, this path is not without peril—those who take the lore of Kyuss into their minds cannot expect to escape unscathed. Such is the price the wormhunter pays for his edge against those who would usher in the Age of Worms.

The wormhunter prestige class is a very customizable one, and since its prerequisites depend as much on exposure to the teachings of Kyuss as anything else, it's a fairly easy class to qualify for. Of course, not everyone wants to risk his sanity just to get an advantage over one specialized type of undead menace. And while clerics and paladins of lawful or good churches might balk at the concept of accepting the wisdom and memories of an evil deity, taking levels in the wormhunter prestige class is not an evil or chaotic act. Likewise, many of the wormhunter's strengths play to characters that focus on melee combat, so those who specialize in ranged combat don't gain as many benefits from taking levels in this class.

Finally, while the wormhunter itself is designed to build off of the Kyuss Mythos, you can use it as a model for designing other prestige classes specialized at fighting against a related group of monsters. Creatures that have parasitic reproductive cycles make the best nominees, such as mind flayers, slaadi, or vampires, although with enough work one can adapt the wormhunter to any type of creature.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a wormhunter, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Special: Must have at some point suffered a minimum of 4 points of

WORMHUNTER

Hit Die d8

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	Gift of the worm 1, kyussbane
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3	*Detect minion*, wormscarred
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3	Gift of the worm 2
4th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Wormeaten
5th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Gift of the worm 3

Skills (2 + Int per level): Concentration, Decipher Script, Gather Information, Heal, Intimidate, Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (history), Knowledge (religion), Search, Sense Motive, Spellcraft, and Survival

GIFTS OF THE WORM

The touch of Kyuss blesses each wormhunter with a unique variety of abilities.

Cannibalization: One of your ability scores increases by 1 point, but at a cost—you must reduce two other ability scores by 1 point (or one other ability score by 2 points).

Increased Spellcasting: Choose a spellcasting class to which you belonged before you gained this Gift of the Worm. You gain new spells per day as if you had also gained a number of levels in this spellcasting class equal to the number of Gifts of the Worm you currently possess (including this one). You do not gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained. If you gain additional Gifts of the Worm at a later date, the number of spellcasting levels granted by increased spellcasting does not increase.

Regained Lore: You gain a number of bonus feats equal to the number of Gifts of the Worm you currently possess (including this one). If you gain additional Gifts of the Worm at a later date, the number of bonus feats granted by regained lore does not increase.

Sinister Smite: You must have already selected the Spiritual Conduit gift and be able to rebuke or control undead in order to select this gift. *Inflict wounds* spells now function as if empowered and maximized when cast on you. Your body's ability to conduct negative energy grows to an extent that you gain the ability to channel negative energy in sudden bursts of power when you strike a particularly solid blow against a living creature. Whenever you deal sneak attack damage or score a critical hit on a living creature, you also deal 2 points of Strength damage to that creature.

Smite Undead: You must have already selected the Spiritual Conduit gift and be able to turn undead in order to select this gift. *Cure wounds* spells now function as if empowered and maximized when cast on you. Your body's ability to conduct positive energy grows to an extent that you gain the ability to channel positive energy in sudden bursts of power when you strike a particularly solid blow against undead. This ability allows you to critically hit or sneak attack undead creatures as if they were living creatures.

Spiritual Conduit: The worms have made your body more conductive to the type of energy you have chosen. All *cure wounds* and all *inflict wounds* spells cast on you function as if empowered. If you have the ability to turn or rebuke undead, your effective cleric level when turning or rebuking undead increases by an amount equal to the number of Gifts of the Worm you currently possess (including this one). If you gain additional Gifts of the Worm at a later date, the number of effective cleric levels granted by spiritual conduct does not increase.

Intelligence damage from a worm of Kyuss. These 4 points of Intelligence damage need not have occurred as a result of a single worm.

Special: The character must meet two of the following five criteria.

- +7 Base attack bonus
- Able to cast 4th-level divine spells.
- Knowlege (religion) 10 ranks.
- Base Fortitude save +4
- Sneak attack +4d6

Special: Must have read through a copy of the *Apostolic Scrolls*.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A wormhunter does not gain any proficiency with weapons or armor.

Gift of the Worm (Ex): By consuming a Kyuss worm, a wormhunter gains insight into the nature of Kyuss and his minions. Alternatively, the wormhunter can allow a Kyuss worm to burrow into his body—this deals the standard 1 point of damage per round for 1d4+1 rounds until the worm reaches the brain. At this point (or immediately, if the wormhunter voluntarily consumes the worm), the wormhunter's body absorbs the worm. This immediately kills the worm (and prevents any Intelligence damage).

Immediately thereafter, the wormhunter absorbs the latent knowledge and power contained within the worm and magnifies it, using it to augment his own abilities. He immediately selects one of the Gifts of the Worm listed in the related sidebar. The benefit granted is permanent. Unfortunately, the influx of knowledge also damages the wormhunter's mind in some way. He must also select one form of madness from those listed in the Madness of the Worm sidebar. This madness cannot be cured by magic, as it becomes as fundamental a part of the wormhunter's being as the gift granted.

A wormhunter gains a second gift at 3rd level, and a third at 5th level. He must secure a new Kyuss worm for each gift. Normally, a Kyuss worm dies after it leaves a spawn and doesn't immediately attach to a host, but alchemists have discovered

that these worms can be stored in a state of dormancy inside a *potion of gentle repose*. Usually, these worms are stored for nefarious purposes, but a wormhunter can take advantage of them to activate one of his gifts. A preserved Kyuss worm costs 1,800 gp (this includes the cost of the *potion of gentle repose*), but is usually considered an illegal (at worst) or controlled (at best) commodity, and as such probably requires at least a DC 25 Gather Information check to track down a seller. Even then, Kyuss worms are generally not for sale in any settlement smaller than a large town.

Once a wormhunter selects a gift and its attendant form of madness, he cannot later change that gift or madness. Likewise, he cannot select a gift or madness more than once.

Kyussbane (Ex): A Wormhunter is particularly skilled at fighting against the minions of Kyuss. He gains a bonus on all weapon damage rolls and checks to overcome spell resistance made against these creatures equal to his wormhunter level.

***Detect Minion* (Sp)**: If the wormhunter concentrates, he can sense the proximity of minions of Kyuss via a subtle tingling in his scars. This functions as the spell *detect undead*, but it only detects minions of Kyuss (be they undead or living). A wormhunter may use this ability at will.

Wormscarred (Su): At 2nd level, the wormhunter's body begins to develop patches of scarring. These scars are as much physical scars left from being infested by Kyuss worms as they are manifestations of the wormhunter's growing taint and lurking madness. The wormscarred wormhunter is immune to disease and gains a +2 bonus on all saving throws against poison.

Wormeaten (Su): At 4th level, a wormhunter's body carries the taint of Kyuss. This taint is detectable as a faint magic aura. It grants the wormhunter a +4 bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy, and Disguise checks made against or opposed by undead creatures, as other undead are strangely comforted and lulled by the taint. The character also gains a +2 bonus on saving throws made against attacks or spells from any minion of Kyuss. A wormeaten wormhunter need never fear infestation by Kyuss worms again—these worms interpret the taint as indication that the character is already a spawn of Kyuss, and do not attempt to infest him. Wormeaten wormhunters are immune to fear effects generated by the minions of Kyuss.

A wormeaten wormhunter takes a –2 penalty on all Bluff and Diplomacy checks made against living creatures (save for those made against other wormhunters), since the taint is somewhat unsettling to the living.

MINION OF KYUSS

Many of the powers and resistances granted by this prestige class function particularly well against the minions of Kyuss. This is a category of monsters and NPCs that includes all cultists of Kyuss, any creatures that work directly for Kyuss (such as avolakias), and undead created by or associated with Kyuss (such as the spawn of Kyuss or the ulgurstasta). Many new monsters introduced in the Age of Worms Adventure Path fit into this category as well—if you're unsure if one of these monsters counts as one of Kyuss' minions, your DM can certainly tell you.

MADNESS OF THE WORM

Even as his might empowers the wormhunter, the touch of Kyuss leaves no mortal mind unscarred.

Hypersomnia: You have extreme difficulty staying awake. You suffer a constant –2 penalty on all Wisdom-based skill checks. Additionally, whenever you are engaged in a repetitive activity (such as using Craft or Profession checks), you must make a DC 10 Will save (up to once per hour) to avoid falling asleep for an hour.

Insomnia: You have extreme difficulty falling asleep. Each time you try to rest, you must make a DC 20 Will save. Failure indicates that your sleep wasn't restful and you awaken fatigued.

Paranoia: You are convinced that the world and all that dwells within are out to do you harm. You cannot take the aid another action, nor can you ever receive bonuses on your own checks from an aid another action. You also take a –2 penalty on Bluff and Diplomacy checks.

Schizophrenia: You periodically lose your grip on reality and have difficulty at times telling the difference between what is real and what is hallucination. These constant hallucinations can cause you to appear erratic, chaotic, and unpredictable. You take a –2 penalty on all Charisma-based skill checks. If you ever roll a natural 1 when making any Charisma-based check, you must make a DC 15 Will save to avoid becoming confused for 1d4 rounds.

Teratophobia: A monstrous phobia is an irrational fear of a type of monster. Select one monster type from the list of ranger favored enemies on page 47 of the *Player's Handbook*. You now take a –2 penalty on attack rolls, skill checks, and Will saving throws made against these monsters. If you possess immunity to fear from some other source, your immunity to fear effects do not apply to fear attacks generated by monsters from this category.

Tic Disorder: You have developed nervous, often violent spasms. These spasms cause a constant –1 penalty on all Reflex saving throws and Dexterity-based skill checks.

by Greg Marks
illustrated by Peter Bergting

The Silver Hexameric Folio

A remnant of the vast and mysterious spell weaver empire, the "book" now known only as the *Silver Hexameric Folio* was discovered only a short time ago. Unearthed and catalogued with its current name by the not especially creative scholar Thannor Gwervilal, this oddly designed volume consists of three separate pentagonal books, each made of silver and covered on all surfaces by inscrutable spell weaver hieroglyphics. A fine metallic cord connects the top and bottom folios to the middle book, forming an interconnected series.

Filled with indecipherable runes, the *Silver Hexameric Folio* has proved a mystery to all modern scholars who have examined it. In order to explain their inability to comprehend the folio, Thannor and his peers claimed that the three books were designed to be read simultaneously but that the pages are numbered non-linearly. As such, the open pages form a difficult code requiring both mental and physical dexterity to accurately reveal, but even then it is still written in a language that only magic can decipher. Thannor's claim has largely been accepted as a likely reasoning, and thus the *Silver Hexameric Folio* has been tagged, filed, and put into storage.

Thannor's claim, however, is wrong.

The *Silver Hexameric Folio* in fact contains some of the last fragments of advanced spell weaver magical lore, arcane sciences perfected by one of the most magically adept races known to prehistory. Currently, these secrets languish in

the hands of the uncomprehending, waiting for a properly brilliant mind to once again reveal them to an unprepared world.

ANAMENSIS

Divination
Level: Brd 3, Sor/Wiz 4
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 hour/level or until discharged (D)

By casting this spell you tap into the musings of some alien collective memory. For the duration of the spell you can perform any Knowledge skill check untrained and can make one Knowledge check with a +10 bonus. If you have the bardic knowledge ability or a similar class ability, the +10 bonus can apply to that check instead. This bonus can only be applied once, as a free action, at any time during the duration of this spell. Once the Knowledge bonus is used the spell ends.

For as long as this spell is in effect, however, you perceive noises—echoing hums, clicks, and complex rhythms—just at the edges of your senses, as if some outside intelligence were trying to communicate with you. For as long as this spell is in effect you take a –4 penalty on all Will saves. Spell weavers are not subject to this penalty.

You cannot have more than one *anamensis* active at the same time.

CYNOSURE

Conjuration (teleportation)
Level: Sor/Wiz 4
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: 1 round
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

As accuracy is frequently a concern when using long-range teleportation spells, spell weavers created this spell to increase the reliability of their innate planes walking ability. By using *cynosure* prior to casting spells like *plane shift* or *teleport*, which require or have a chance of requiring you to roll to randomly determine the location targets are transported to, you decrease the distance targets appear from the intended location by 75% (rounded down to the nearest mile).

SHAPES IN SILVER

Contrary to the frustrated suppositions of Thannor Gwervilal, the *Silver Hexameric Folio* is not merely a randomly organized code requiring multiple pairs of hands to handle. Anyone who spends a day examining the *Silver Hexameric Folio* can make a DC 25 Intelligence check. While failure reveals nothing, a successful check exposes a fundamental secret of the folio: If the chains connecting the individual books of the folio are removed, the silver pages of each can be reassembled. When the correct four pages from each of the three books are removed and placed together in the shape of a dodecahedron, the arcane runes thus revealed expose a wealth of arcane secrets. This assemblage results in a twelve-sided silver polyhedron that hums as the writing glows faintly. After its true shape is discovered, the *Silver Hexameric Folio* can be collapsed back into its normal form or reconstructed as a full-round action requiring a DC 15 Dexterity check.

NEW SPELLS OF THE SILVER HEXAMERIC FOLIO

The *Silver Hexameric* Folio contains several unique spells created by the peerless hands of ancient spell weaver masters. The following new spells are among those found within its hidden knowledge.

The artificer standard class from the *Eberron Campagin Setting* casts numerous spells that manipulate magic items, making spells like *modulate* and *siphon* perfect for these characters. Conversely, a number of artificer spells are thematicly similar to the spells included upon the *Silver Hexametric Folio*'s shimmering sheets and might find their way into its collected knowledge.

Bard Spell

3rd-Level Bard Spell

Anamensis: Taps into an alien unconscious, providing a bonus on Knowledge skill checks.

Sorcerer/Wizard Spells

3rd-Level Sorcerer/Wizard Spells

Modulate: Temporarily changes what spell is cast from a wand.

Siphon: Drains charges from wands or staffs to replace expended spells.

4th-Level Sorcerer/Wizard Spells

Anamensis: Taps into an alien unconscious, providing a bonus on Knowledge skill checks.

Cynosure: Increases the accuracy of inaccurate teleportation spells.

8th-Level Sorcerer/Wizard Spell

Spell Star: Creates a magic construction that counters spells targeting the caster.

GHOST IN THE MACHINE

Those arcanists who successfully decode the mystery of the *Silver Hexameric Folio* are in for a surprise. In addition to being a nontraditional spellbook, the folio is also a sentient magic item, although one with no abilities beyond its own self-awareness. Created as a repository of spell weaver magical lore, the collection was also meant to be a teacher of not only the spell weavers' magical tradition, but also their history. The volume, calling itself Numunal, can speak with anyone who holds it, as well as any spell weaver within 100 feet via a form of telepathy, filling the target's head with strange chirps and beeps that are likely mistaken for noises made audibly by the folio. While spell weavers understand this noise as their ancient abandoned language (see the "Ecology of the Spell Weaver" on page 62 of this issue), the application of a *comprehend languages* or *tongues* spell translates this unusual mental communication for other races.

Those who come to understand Numunal find it to be helpful and friendly, offering to assist the fledging researcher in his search for further lost lore. This sociability, however, is merely a charade. Numunal seeks the return of the spell weaver empire and encourages his new master to horde magic items and seek out anything spell weaver related. It does this in the secret hope that eventually its user might encounter an actual spell weaver who Numunal can present the collected mass of magic items to, any of which might be a piece of the Code of Reversion.

Numunal has the following statistics: Int 17, Wis 10, Cha 17; Alignment N; telepathy (limited), blindsense 120 ft.; Bluff +13, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (history) +13, Spellcraft +13; Ego 11 score.

For example, a wizard who casts *cynosure* before casting a *teleport* spell that winds up off target by 18 miles actually only appears 4 miles away from his intended destination.

Cynosure affects the next conjuration (teleportation) spell or similar special ability (such as a spell weaver's *plane shift* spell-like ability) of any creature touched. *Cynosure* has no effect on spells of the teleportation subschool that do not have a chance of deviating. If this spell is cast on a spell like *teleport* and the spell does not deviate, *cynosure* has no effect. This spell lasts for only 1 round and is wasted if a relevant transportation spell is not cast within that time.

MODULATE

Transmutation
Level: Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 round
Range: Touch
Target: 1 wand touched
Duration: 1 minute/level (D)
Saving Throw: Yes (harmless, object)
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless, object)

By casting *modulate* on the target wand, followed by a second spell, you temporarily alter the wand to cast a different spell. After casting this spell, the next spell you cast upon the target wand infuses the remaining charges, allowing the wand to discharge that spell instead of the one it was created to cast. The spell cast after *modulate* must be one or more levels lower than the spell the wand normally casts. While under the effect of *modulate*, spells cast from the target wand are cast at the minimum caster level. Each use of a *modulated* wand expends two charges from the wand. If there are insufficient charges in the wand to invoke the new spell, the wand cannot be activated.

For example, while trapped in the dark a 5th-level wizard wishes to cast a number of *light* spells (a 0-level spell) from his *wand of magic missile* (a 1st-level spell), which happens to have a caster level of 3rd. The wizard casts *modulate* and in the following round attaches a prepared *light* spell. The wand can now cast *light* as a 1st-level caster (the minimum caster level), but expends two charges per casting. The wizard may now use the wand to cast *light* instead of *magic missile* for 5 minutes, at which time it reverts back to a normal *wand of magic missile*.

SIPHON

Transmutation
Level: Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: Wand or staff touched
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

You drain the charges from a magic item, replacing spells you have already cast. By touching a staff or wand that has at least 5 charges left, you expend 5 of those charges to replace a cast spell or used spell slot. The spell or slot replaced must be of a level equal to or less than the highest-level spell

the staff or wand holds. Upon draining these charges, a wizard regains any one spell or slot of the affected level that he has already cast that day. For example, a wizard who has cast his only *fly* spell for the day (a 3rd-level spell) may drain 5 charges from his *wand of fireballs* (another 3rd-level spell) to regain *fly* or any lower-level spell he has cast.

If the wand or staff holds enough charges, one casting of this spell can replace multiple spell levels at once. For example, a sorcerer who has expended three of his 5th-level spell slots may drain 15 charges from his *staff of frost* to regain all three spell slots.

Siphon has no effect on wands or staffs that do not hold enough charges to replenish the desired number of spell levels.

SPELL STAR

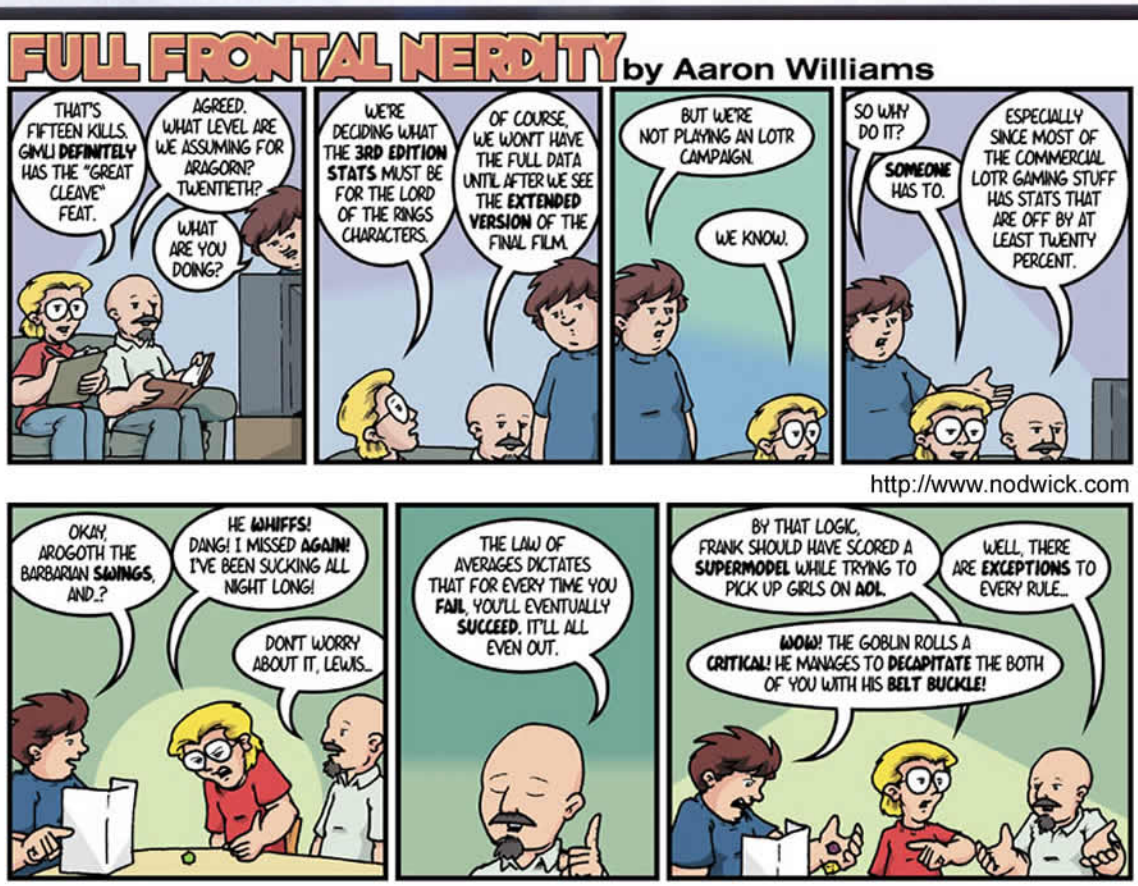
Abjuration
Level: Sor/Wiz 8
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 round + 6 rounds to add spells
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 10 minutes/level (D)

This spell creates a glowing blue-white, six-pointed star that hovers in front of the caster and sheds light equal to a candle. For the 6 rounds following the casting of *spell star*, the creator may cast one spell each round into the spell star. Only spells of 6th-level or lower may be placed into the *spell star*. Once the *spell star* is full, it disappears and can only be seen with an *arcane sight*, *see invisibility*, *true seeing*, or similar effect.

For the duration of the spell, whenever the caster is targeted by one of the spells placed within the *spell star*, the spell is automatically countered as a counterspell action, requiring no action (or even knowledge) on the target's part. The countered spell is then removed from the *spell star*. Once a spell is removed, the *spell star* cannot counter another casting of that spell. To counter the same spell more than once, that spell must be placed into the spell star more than once. For example, a 14th-level wizard casts *spell star* and in the following rounds casts three *magic missile* spells, *ray of enfeeblement*, *baleful polymorph*, and *phantasmal killer*. Afterward, for the duration of the spell, this *spell star* automatically counters each of the spells once, except *magic missile*, which it can counter up to three times.

You may not have more than one *spell star* functioning at the same time. Wearing a *ring of counterspells* immediately ends *spell star*. Slots that are not filled with spells within 6 rounds of the *spell star* being cast are effectively wasted. A *spell star* is briefly visible whenever it counters a spell, allowing viewers to make a DC 28 Spellcraft check to recognize the spell or—as this spell is probably quite rare—at least discern its effect. A *spell star* takes up no room and cannot be damaged.

Material Component: A moonstone worth 25 gp.


FULL FRONTAL NERDITY by Aaron Williams
THAT'S FIFTEEN KILLS. GIMLI DEFINITELY HAS THE "GREAT CLEAVE" FEAT.
AGREED. WHAT LEVEL ARE WE ASSUMING FOR ARAGORN? TWENTIETH?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
WE'RE DECIDING WHAT THE 3RD EDITION STATS MUST BE FOR THE LORD OF THE RINGS CHARACTERS.
OF COURSE, WE WON'T HAVE THE FULL DATA UNTIL AFTER WE SEE THE EXTENDED VERSION OF THE FINAL FILM.
BUT WE'RE NOT PLAYING AN LOTR CAMPAIGN.
WE KNOW.
SO WHY DO IT?
SOMEONE HAS TO.
ESPECIALLY SINCE MOST OF THE COMMERCIAL LOTR GAMING STUFF HAS STATS THAT ARE OFF BY AT LEAST TWENTY PERCENT.
http://www.nodwick.com
OKAY, AROGOTH THE BARBARIAN SWINGS, AND..?
HE WHIFFS! DANG! I MISSED AGAIN! I'VE BEEN SUCKING ALL NIGHT LONG!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, LEWIS...
THE LAW OF AVERAGES DICTATES THAT FOR EVERY TIME YOU FAIL, YOU'LL EVENTUALLY SUCCEED. IT'LL ALL EVEN OUT.
BY THAT LOGIC, FRANK SHOULD HAVE SCORED A SUPERMODEL WHILE TRYING TO PICK UP GIRLS ON AOL.
WELL, THERE ARE EXCEPTIONS TO EVERY RULE...
WOW! THE GOBLIN ROLLS A CRITICAL! HE MANAGES TO DECAPITATE THE BOTH OF YOU WITH HIS BELT BUCKLE!

by Andy Collins • illustrated by Niklas Janssen

OFFICIAL ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

This month, the Sage tackles an array of queries regarding the interactions of various effects and durations. You can email the Sage your questions at **sageadvice@paizo.com**.

What exactly does "once per day" mean? Does it mean "once per 24-hour period" or is it recharged after the character has rested for 8 hours, like spells?

It means that in any given day, the ability may be used once. So what constitutes a day? That's where things get a little tricky and rely on the DM's common sense.

The Sage advises using daybreak as the start of a "day," meaning that all daily-use abilities are recharged in full each morning, regardless of exactly when they were used during the previous 24-hour period. For the vast majority of games, that's when most abilities are recharged anyway (spells, for example), which makes it easy to use.

If your players try to abuse this flexibility—such as by adventuring through the night and then suddenly getting all their abilities back when the sun comes up—the DM should feel free to be more restrictive. It's entirely reasonable to require a full 8 hours of rest before allowing daily-use abilities to recharge (even for those characters who don't require sleep).

If a monster has resistance and vulnerability to the same kind of damage (such as fire), which effect is applied first? And when does the saving throw come in?

Always roll a saving throw before applying any effects that would increase or reduce the damage dealt. For example, if a frost giant is struck by a *fireball* that would deal 35 points of damage, it would roll its Reflex save, then apply its vulnerability to fire after determining how much damage the *fireball* would normally deal. If the save failed, the frost giant would take 52 points of damage: 35 + one-half of 35 (17.5, rounded down to 17). A successful save would mean the frost giant took only 25 points of damage: one-half of 35 rounded down (17), plus one-half of 17 rounded down (8).

If the creature has both resistance and vulnerability to the same kind of damage, apply the resistance (which reduces the damage dealt by the effect) before applying the vulnerability (which increases the damage taken by the creature). For example, imagine that our frost giant from the previous example wore a *ring of minor fire resistance* (granting resistance to fire 10). If the save failed, the frost giant would take 37 points of fire damage: 35 (*fireball*) – 10 (resistance to fire 10) = 25, plus one-half of 25 (12.5, rounded down to 12). If the save succeeded, the frost giant would take only 10 points of damage: 17 (half damage from the *fireball*, rounded down) – 10 (resistance to fire 10) = 7, plus one-half of 7 (3.5, rounded down to 3).

As a general guideline, whenever the rules don't stipulate an order of operations for special effects (such as spells or special abilities), you should apply them in the order that's most beneficial to the creature. In the case of damage, this typically means applying any damage-reducing effects first, before applying any effects that would increase damage.

What is the duration of the *invisibility* granted by a *ring of invisibility*?

In general, you should assume that any spell effect mimicked by a magic item treats all variables of the effect as if it were the spell cast with the item's caster level. In this case, the duration of the ring's ability is the equivalent of an *invisibility* spell cast by a 3rd-level caster (the ring's caster level): 3 minutes. Of course, nothing prevents a character from activating the ring's power more frequently than this (thus ensuring a constant invisibility), as long as he's willing (and able) to spend the actions to do so.

When I affix a *dispel magic* to my *hallow* spell, what type of dispel effect is it—a targeted dispel, area dispel, or counterspell? Can I choose when I create the *hallow*?

A *dispel magic* fixed to a *hallow* or *unhallow* spell may only be treated as an area dispel, not as a targeted dispel or a counterspell.

When a spell effect is fixed to a *hallow* spell, how do unusual durations (such as those of *protection from energy*) or instantaneous durations (such as those of *dispel magic*) work?

The spell effect fixed to a *hallow* or *unhallow* spell is treated as being cast on any eligible creature each time it enters. In the case of "ablative" spell effects that are used up gradually (such as *aid* or *protection from energy*), the full effect of the spell is renewed each time the eligible creature re-enters the hallowed/unhallowed area (with the newer version entirely replacing the older version). In the case of instantaneous effects (such as *dispel magic*), the spell affects eligible creatures each time they enter.

Is there any way to get rid of an *unhallow*? It is instantaneous, which implies that it lasts forever and can't be dispelled.

You can't use *dispel magic* to end a *hallow* or *unhallow* effect (although you can use *dispel magic* to end the duration of the spell effect tied to the *hallow* or *unhallow*).

If everlasting *unhallows* bother your sensibility, the Sage recommends the following house rule: Allow *hallow*, if cast anywhere within the area of the *unhallow*, to negate the *unhallow* effect (and vice versa). This prevents PCs from easily overcoming an *unhallow* (thanks to the costly material component and casting time) while simultaneously allowing for such effects to be overcome with the proper effort.

Do temporary hit points from two applications of the same effect stack? What about from different effects? If I have temporary hit points from multiple sources, how should I apply damage?

Temporary hit points from two applications of the same effect don't stack; instead, the highest number of temporary hit points applies in place of all others. Temporary hit points from different sources stack, but you must keep track of them separately.

For example, imagine a character who gained 15 temporary hit points from an *aid* spell. After taking 8 points of damage, she has 7 temporary hit points left from the spell. If another *aid* spell were cast on the same character granting 12 temporary hit points, this total would replace the other spell's total, meaning the character would now have 12 temporary hit points (rather than 19). If the character then cast *false life* on herself, she would add the full benefit of that spell to the temporary hit points from the *aid* spell.

This also applies to temporary hit points gained from *energy drain* and similar special abilities. Each successful attack counts as one application of the effect (meaning that an attack that bestows 2 or more negative levels still counts as only one application of the effect). For example, a wight gains 5 temporary hit points each time it bestows a negative level with its slam attack. If it bestows

another negative level while it has 2 temporary hit points remaining from the first attack, the new temporary hit points would replace the old ones.

Temporary hit points are "first-in, first-out." Damage should be taken off the oldest temporary-hit-point-granting effect first; when that effect is exhausted, apply damage to the next oldest effect. For this reason, you must track each supply of temporary hp separately.

What effect does the Augment Healing feat (*Complete Divine*, page 79) have on *lesser vigor* (*Complete Divine*, page 186) and similar spells?

Augment Healing adds twice the spell's level to the total healing it provides. The simplest method is to have the spell apply the extra healing to the first round of fast healing. Thus, *lesser vigor* (a 1st-level spell) would cure an extra 2 hp of damage in the first round, for a total of 3 hit points. Each round thereafter it would heal the normal 1 hp of damage. *Mass lesser vigor* (a 3rd-level spell) would cure an extra 6 hp of damage to each target in the first round (for a total of 7 hit points), and would heal 1 hp of damage each round thereafter as normal.

What is the duration of the wild shape class feature of the master of many forms prestige class (*Complete Adventurer*, page 59)? What about the maximum Hit Dice of the form?

Technically speaking, the master of many forms doesn't grant the wild shape class feature; it only improves the character's pre-existing wild shape class feature. Thus, the character would use the normal rules from whichever class she got her wild shape class feature (probably from the druid class) to determine duration and similar effects. Her prestige class levels stack with class levels from the original source for determining both the duration of the effect and the maximum HD of the assumed form.

Can a wizard use a *summon monster* spell to get a familiar from the list of creatures for that spell? Would she need to apply the Persistent Spell feat to the *summon monster* spell, upping the duration to 24 hours and allowing time to bond the potential familiar to her? And does a summoned familiar receive the benefits of the Augment Summoning feat?

There's so much wrong with these questions that the Sage hardly knows where to begin.

1) The fact that a creature appears on a *summon monster* list has no effect on the creature's eligibility to be selected as a familiar. The only creatures legal to select as a familiar are those listed in the *Player's Handbook*, with occasional expansions to that list as presented in other sources (such as in *Stormwrack*). Some feats, such as Improved Familiar (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 200) further expand the list of eligible creatures.

2) You can't use Persistent Spell on a *summon monster* spell, because the spell doesn't have a "fixed or personal range" as required by the feat (see *Complete Arcane*, page 81).

3) Augment Summoning has no effect on a familiar's abilities. Familiars are obtained by completing a 24-hour magical ritual (*Player's Handbook*, page 54), typically with the desired creature present, not by means of a summoning effect.

What kind of action is it to attack with a *spectral hand* spell?

Attacking with a *spectral hand* is part of the action of casting the touch spell to be delivered. If the initial touch attack misses, you may make additional attacks with the *spectral hand* in later rounds using the normal rules for holding the charge of a touch spell (*Player's Handbook*, page 176).

Can a *spectral hand* spell deliver a touch spell from a staff or wand? What about from a scroll?

No. The spell delivered by *spectral hand* must be one that you cast. Activating a magic item is not the same as casting a spell, even if the effect is virtually identical.

Dragon

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by Joe Pitkin

GIANTS IN THE SADDLE

BARBARIAN

Few classes are as viscerally satisfying to play as the barbarian. Barbarian rage—that carnival of crushing and screaming, grunting and cleaving that can so quickly reduce a pack of opponents into piles of so much tainted meat—provides a thrill hard to resist. Clearly, the standard barbarian taps into the spirit of Conan and the tales of Viking berserkers: the powerfully built wild man who can enter a frenzied orgy of violence at will.

Historically, not every warrior belonging to a group considered barbaric relied on his physical prowess. Some of history's most notorious barbarians—Attila the Hun, Arpád the Magyar King, and Genghis Khan, for instance—hardly reflected Schwarzenegger-esque proportions (Attila was reputed to be quite a small man, in fact). How, then, were they able to loot and pillage just as effectively as their burly Viking colleagues? The answer lies in a contemporary description of the warriors of the Mongol horde: "They were small men on the ground, but they were giants in the saddle."

The horselord is a variant barbarian. Unless otherwise noted, a horselord advances in the same manner as a barbarian (same Hit Die, base attack bonus, saving throw bonuses, skill points, and so on). When a character elects to take a level of barbarian or horselord, he may not later take levels in the other class. This prevents the character from gaining the benefits of a 1st-level barbarian twice.

HORSELORD CLASS FEATURES

The horselord loses fast movement and trap sense, but gains several new abilities. The horselord does not rage, replacing that ability with a battle ecstasy he can use with the same frequency.

Battle Ecstasy: Traditional cultures from the Celts to the Sioux speak of warriors able—through special prayers, protective garments, or even nakedness in battle—to become invulnerable to the weapons of the enemy. A horselord who enters battle ecstasy becomes difficult to harm. He temporarily gains a +4 bonus to Dexterity, a +4 bonus to Constitution, and damage reduction 1/—. The horselord's damage reduction while in battle ecstasy increases the damage reduction he receives at higher levels (thus, a 7th-level horselord has DR 2/— while in battle ecstasy). A horselord can use any skill or feat while in battle ecstasy, but all skill checks except for Handle Animal and Ride take a –2 penalty. Battle ecstasy lasts as long as a barbarian's rage and has the same fatiguing effect. Beginning at 17th level, the horselord is no longer fatigued after leaving a battle ecstasy. The horselord's battle ecstasy has no greater rage or mighty rage equivalents.

Skills: A horselord takes no penalty on Ride checks for riding bareback and gains a +2 bonus when using any kind of saddle (which stacks with the normal +2 bonus on Ride checks when using a military saddle). A horselord must choose a kind of animal he knows of and has ridden as a mount at least once. He receives a +2 bonus on Handle Animal checks whenever dealing with the selected kind of animal (most horselords choose the animals their tribes routinely use).

Animal Companion: At 4th level, the horselord's mount becomes an animal companion as per the ranger abilitiy of the same level. The horselord must own and ride the horse for at least two months before he can bond with it in this way. Treat the mount in all ways as the animal companion of a ranger of the same level as the horselord, except the horselord's mount retains the animal type and is not considered a magical beast. If the mount is killed or otherwise lost, the horselord can find a new companion mount after 1d4 months of searching and a successful DC 15 Handle Animal check.

Improved Mounted Archery: At 6th level, the horselord gains Improved Mounted Archery (see page 101 of *Complete Warrior*) as a bonus feat.

by Robert J. Hahn

FOCUSED PERFORMER

Some artists immerse themselves in their art and tune out all distractions, including their own audience. Combining this dedication with arcane power offers powerful options.

FOCUSED PERFORMER [GENERAL]

Your mastery allows you to finish your performance even when surrounded by distractions.

Prerequisite: Concentration 1 rank, Perform 4 ranks, bardic music class ability.

Benefit: When required to make a Concentration check to maintain an arcane spell with a verbal component you may use your Perform skill instead. You cannot use this ability on a silent spell.

Normal: A character uses Concentration to cast spells under duress.

FOCUSED PERFORMANCE [BARDIC MUSIC]

You can modify your bardic music by channeling it back into itself.

Prerequisite: Concentration 1 rank, Perform 6 ranks, Focused Performer, bardic music class ability.

Benefit: You can expend daily uses of your bardic music ability to modify your performance. You must succeed at a Perform check (DC below) to successfully modify your bardic music ability. You may only apply one modification to a use of bardic music.

BARDIC MUSIC MODIFICATIONS

The most popular bardic music modifications follow.

Accompaniment: Spend three daily uses of bardic music to perform two abilities at the same time. You must succeed at a Perform check every round or else you prematurely lose the rhythm and end both abilities early. Each round you may choose to stop using one ability and maintain the other as per the standard rules for bardic music. You may use this modification with all bardic music abilities. DC 20 + highest Perform ranks required.

Dramatic Pause: While maintaining a bardic music ability you make a check to pause your performance and take another action (such as casting spell, making an attack, and so on). The following round you must resume the performance as though you never stopped, but you may attempt another dramatic pause in following rounds. Each dramatic pause expends two daily uses of bardic music. You may use this modification with fascinate, inspire courage, inspire greatness, and inspire heroics. DC 20 + Perform ranks required.

Harmony: You may spend an extra use of bardic music to allow an ability that normally affects only one creature to affect two creatures instead. You may use this modification with inspire competence, suggestion, and song of freedom. DC 20 + Perform ranks required.

Individual Performance: You may spend an extra use of bardic music to target a single individual (other than yourself) with an ability affecting multiple targets. If affected, the target receives double the bonus or penalty. You may use this modification with fascinate, inspire courage, inspire greatness, and inspire heroics. DC 15 + Perform ranks required.

Projection: Spend two daily uses of bardic music to double the area of effect of the ability you activate next. You may use this modification with countersong, fascinate, inspire competence, inspire greatness, inspire heroics, and song of freedom. DC 10 + Perform ranks required.

Rhythm: If you maintain an ability for 3 or more rounds and expend an extra daily use of bardic music you cause the ability you're using to last an additional 2 rounds after you stop performing. Make the Perform check when you've stopped maintaining the ability. You may use this modification with fascinate, inspire competence, inspire courage, inspire greatness, and inspire heroics. DC 10 + Perform ranks required.

Riveting Performance: By spending an extra daily use of bardic music, all targets in range who hear you are affected regardless of line of sight. You may use this modification with fascinate and inspire competence. DC 15 + Perform ranks required.

BARD

by Lisa McSherry

RELIGIOUS TITLES

CLERIC

Presented here is a collection of titles and descriptions of real-world leadership roles used for those in religious hierarchies.

Abbess: The female leader of a nunnery (a female-only version of a monastery).

Abbot: The male leader of a monastery.

Anchorite: Similar to a hermit, but the privations are more severe, and the religious dedication is greater. Originally, an anchorite was a hermit bricked into the wall of the church while alive, spending the remainder of life in a small cell with food and waste passed through a single window.

Archbishop: Governs a group of bishops in a region.

Bishop: A powerful priest with local authority; the sacred equivalent to a baron. Direct successor of the twelve apostles in Catholicism.

Caliph: From the Arabic for "successor" or "follower," the supreme spiritual leader of Sunni Islam with authority directly from Muhammad—equivalent to the Catholic Pope. Shiite Muslims do not accept the Caliph as a valid spiritual descendant of Muhammad.

Cardinal: Second only to the Pope in dignity and status; cardinals act as the Pope's council.

Cleric: A general term for Christian religious specialists, applies to both monks and priests. Plural is clergy.

Diviner: Someone who interacts with the divine, usually through symbolological systems (runes, tarot, and so on) and predicts the future.

Father: A term of respect for a man, although not for many sects of Christian fundamentalism. Variants include Padre, Pater, and Papa.

Hermit: A person who retires from life and lives alone, usually for religious purposes.

Imam: From the Arabic for "he who stands before," the imam is a Shiite Islam supreme spiritual leader who traces his line of authority from Muhammad—similar to the Catholic Pope. Sunni Muslims do not accept the Imam as a valid spiritual descendant of Muhammad.

Magi: One of a Medean caste or tribe of priest-nobles from pre-Zoroastrian Iran.

Minister: One who attends to people, who cares about them, leads them in worship and counsels the troubled.

Monk: One who lives in a monastery, a place where many people withdraw from the world. A female monk is a nun.

Mother: A term of respect for a woman. Also a traditional title for any priestess who represents a goddess of the earth. Variants include Madre, Mater, Virgin Mother, Great Mother, Mother Superior, and so on.

Mystic: A religious believer who concentrates on the spiritual aspect of religion, perhaps to the exclusion of the ritual and mythical aspects. A mystic may be a visionary and a prophet.

Pope: The highest mortal leader of the Roman Catholic church.

Preacher: One who speaks to a group about religion, perhaps using stories from religious texts to facilitate the audience's belief.

Priest: A religious specialist with a formal position in a religious organization, primarily as the ritual leader, although he may also hold a bureaucratic position, be a preacher, and so on. A female priest is a priestess.

Prophet: One who actively seeks out divine knowledge to predict the future, combining aspects of a preacher and a diviner.

Saint: One who lives a prominent and overtly religious life that leads to a legend illustrating the world and divine will. A saint might intercede in favor of faithful believers—or to punish evil—after death.

Shaman: A type of religious leader found in small societies—a combination of mystic, preacher, healer, and priest. The word originated with the Tungus people of Siberia.

Witch: A worker of magic (usually female). The word comes from an old English word meaning "to twist." A "warlock" is not a male witch, but an oath breaker, and most witches consider the term insulting.

Witch Doctor: One who can "smell" wicked witches and their evil spells and can cure the harm they cause. Found in societies where "witch" is synonymous with "evil."

Wizard: A learned person who controls vast powers of magic and might or might not have religious duties. The title is etymologically related to "wisdom."

by William L. Christensen

ANIMAL MAGIC

DRUID

Animal companions fill many roles, serving as mounts, guardians, hunters, and scouts. Druids and rangers come to rely on the beasts and often fit them with magical gear, hoping to increase their effectiveness in combat. These two new items, while suitable for most animals and magical beasts, are designed to enhance animal companions.

BARDING OF SIZE ALTERATION

Medvyed, a particularly intelligent and powerful winter wolf, once scourged the northlands. He led a tribe of fearsome goblins and trolls, demanding tribute of all those in the region and enacting swift and horrible retribution upon those who refused to comply. After narrowly escaping death at the hands of adventurers, Medvyed commissioned a frost giant shaman to craft him the first suit of *barding of size alteration*. His shining armor made him even more fearsome and renowned throughout the land. After encountering Medvyed multiple times, the rangers and druids of the region crafted similar suits for their own animal companions. With their newfound might they hunted down Medvyed and destroyed him. Since then, *barding of size alteration* has grown greatly in popularity.

Barding of size alteration exists for animals of all kinds and shapes. Wrought of mithral and often bearing elaborate etchings of battle featuring the animal it was crafted for, *barding of size alteration* is typically created with a unique animal in mind. A blacksmith can easily adjust the armor to fit animals of a similar kind and size with a DC 12 Craft (armorsmithing) check (for example, wolf barding can be adjusted to fit a dog, but cannot be worn by a bear).

Barding of size alteration is *+1 mithral chainmail barding*. Three times per day, the barding can shrink the animal wearing it, as the spell *reduce animal*. Once per day, the barding can make the animal wearing it grow, as the spell *animal growth*. To activate these abilities, the animal's keeper must touch the animal and speak the proper command word. This requires a standard action, and the abilities only function if the animal is willing to alter its size (in nearly all cases the animal willingly changes if commanded by its master, but is not likely to comply if commanded by another). Animals wearing *barding of size alteration* with an Intelligence score of 5 or higher and the ability to speak may activate the barding's abilities themselves.

Moderate transmutation; CL 9th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *animal growth, reduce animal;* Price 45,718 gp (Medium or smaller), 55,718 (Large); Weight by size.

SPECTRAL COLLAR

The barbarians of the Brynhildr clan have lived in harmony with the wild wolf packs of their territory for generations. They call the wolves "mourning specters" for their forlorn howls and seemingly supernatural ability to blend with their surroundings while moving. Those members of the clan who choose the path of the ranger or druid take the most fearsome wolves as companions. To honor their companions and accentuate their ghostly nature, the barbarians create *spectral collars*.

Spectral collars vary in appearance according to the whims of their creators, and can be crafted from leather, metal, or wood. They are typically marked by extravagant works of craftsmanship, being etched with elaborate designs or studded with gems or spikes.

An animal wearing a *spectral collar* gains the benefit of a constant *blur* effect, as the spell. In addition, once per day the animal can cast *fear* by vocalizing in whatever manner is natural for its kind, with the intent of driving away creatures. A DC 14 Will save negates the effect. A humanoid may also wear a *spectral collar* in the amulet body slot.

Moderate illusion and necromancy; CL 7th; Craft Wondrous Item, *blur, fear;* Price 34,080 gp; Weight 1 lb.

by Paul Leach

THE PIKEMAN

FIGHTER

Philip, the father of Alexander the Great, introduced the *sarissa* (long pike) to the Macedonian phalanx around 340 BCE, providing them with a distinct advantage over their Greek hoplite foes armed with shorter spears. The *pezetairos*, or "foot companion," was a disciplined warrior responsibile for holding the main enemy line in place while the heavy cavalry delivered devastating attacks to the flanks. The Macedonian pikemen gave Alexander the tools he needed to overcome the powerful Persian Empire and to conquer lands as far away as the Indian frontier. The pike phalanx remained a core component in the evolving successor armies of Greece and Asia for more than 100 years. The superior maneuverability of the Roman legion heralded its demise, but the pikeman did return to the battlefield more than a millennium later, in the armies of the European Renaissance.

The Macedonian *pezetairos* served in a *syntagma*, a company of 256 men with its own command staff and standard. He might have been individually brave, but he and his brethren were most successful when they moved and stood together instead of each man taking his own initiative. The *sarissa*-armed phalanx, between eight and sixteen ranks deep, presented crushing weight and deadly reach against any foe who dared to face its front. When not engaged in normal battlefield actions, the *pezetairoi* were armed with short swords and javelins and they assumed siege and anti-guerilla duties. Elephants became popular with some of Alexander's successors, and pikemen and bowmen often fought from small wooden towers mounted on the backs of the fearsome beasts.

The typical Macedonian *pezetairos* wore a leather corselet with metal greaves (equivalent to D&D leather armor) and used a *pelte*, a light bronze shield. Breastplates were more common for officers, while padded armor and chain shirts came into use with the rank and file of the successor armies. The *pezetairos* usually wore a plain helmet, but commanders had crested models that sometimes bore elaborate decorations.

THE PEZETAIROS IN D&D

The *pezetairos* needs good physical ability scores (Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution) to survive. While all soldiers need decent Constitution and Strength scores, a *pezetairos* can survive and thrive with just a high Dexterity. A high Dexterity offsets the pikeman's light armor and otherwise poor Armor Class. Combat Reflexes benefits from a high Dexterity and is quite handy when paired with a warrior class who stands in the second rank with a reach weapon, even in a dungeon environment. Every *pezetairos* should have (and be proficient with) a *sarissa*.

THE SARISSA

In D&D terms, the *sarissa* is either a long spear or an awl pike (detailed in "The Point of Pole Arms," from DRAGON #331). A fighter who wishes to emulate the *pezetairos* should acquire proficiency in the *sarissa* as well as taking the Shield and Pike Style feat to master its use and maximize his defense.

SHIELD AND PIKE STYLE [GENERAL]

You can use a light shield in conjunction with a piercing pole arm with reach, such as a long-spear or awl pike.

Prerequisite: Proficiency with selected piercing pole arm, proficiency with light shield.

Benefit: You may wield a light shield with its full Armor Class bonus when using a two-handed piercing pole arm weapon with reach.

Normal: You may hold items in the hand that wields a light shield, but you cannot wield a weapon in the same hand.

Special: A fighter may select Shield and Pike Style as one of his fighter bonus feats (see page 38 of the *Player's Handbook*).

by Amber E. Scott

BACKGROUNDS

MONK

As warriors, truth-seekers, heroes, spies, or even assassins, monks can fill almost any party role. The available options can overwhelm newer players. Each of the following vignettes suggests a particular direction for your monk or offers a character concept. Your DM must approve the small mechanical bonus associated with each background.

FISTS OF STEEL

One day your years of practice breaking boards and stone blocks paid off when a brigand carrying a spiked steel shield barred your path and demanded a toll. Your refusal sparked a fight, and you discovered the bandit possessed great skill at bashing you with his spiked shield. Tiring of the whelp's arrogance, you focused your strength into your fist, let out a yell, and smashed your hand into his shield. The shield crumpled and cracked and the chastened brigand ran off.

Suggested Benefit: If you penetrate the hardness of an object with hardness 10 or greater when making an unarmed strike you deal +1 extra point of damage to the object.

GRASSHOPPER

The giant stone steps of the temple, each 3 feet tall, sometimes humble even the most arrogant visitor. This lesson in humility proved almost fatal when a young girl in town accidentally ate a poisoned apple set out for rats. You grabbed the convulsing child and ran full speed to the temple, but found it impossible to climb the steps with the girl in your arms. You hopped up the stairs one by one while holding the girl, shouting for the clerics the whole time, getting her inside with moments to spare. The child's hug rewarded you for the ache in your calves.

Suggested Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Jump checks made to perform a high jump.

MONASTERY OF DREAMS

You suffered a tragic accident that resulted in unconsciousness, awaking sometime later to find monks tending you. The monks explained that you had been badly injured and required rest and quiet. For the next three days you remained inside the monastery, perusing a vast library of ancient scrolls and texts and speaking with the enlightened monks. On the evening of the third night you went to sleep and awoke in a strange temple. The clerics there claimed that you'd slipped into a coma after your accident and had been unconscious for an entire month! Now you wonder every night if sleep will bring another visit to the strange monastery.

Suggested Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Knowledge (history) checks made to recall details of myths and legends.

STUNNING RIVALRY

As part of your training your master insisted that you learn how to stun your opponents. He set you to sparring with Joben, the best warrior in your class. Day after day you sparred with him in the courtyard, and in every match he knocked you dizzy. Finally the day came when Joben threw a punch with an ill-concealed snicker, and you shrugged off the attack instead of going cross-eyed. Your return blow stunned Joben, broke his nose, and earned you a dedicated rival—but also the praise of your master.

Suggested Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Fortitude saves made to resist Stunning Fist attacks.

TANGLEFOOT TRAP

The alchemist had already killed three people and the city watch warned you away. You assured them that you could deal with one unbalanced woman. Slipping noiselessly into her home, you stalked the murderess in her laboratory. When you moved to apprehend her, however, you triggered a trap that sent a half-dozen tanglefoot bags sailing your way. In an amazing display of agility you avoided every one of the bursting bags and grabbed the alchemist before she could run. The watch, and the families of the victims, were most grateful.

Suggested Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Reflex saves to avoid becoming entangled.

by Hal Maclean

SOLSTICE KNIGHT

PALADIN

During the winter solstice, when the forces of light ebb before soundless legions of darkness, a handful of champions maintain a long and lonely vigil. Their prayers, fervent denials of the forces of evil, help to sustain the mortal realm through its time of trial. In the morning, when the rooster crows and the dawn begins its inexorable march toward the triumph of midsummer, they sometimes find their faith rewarded in unusual ways.

A paladin who endures one of these vigils gains the option of choosing solstice knight substitution levels. A substitution level is a level of a given class that you take instead of the level described for the standard class. Selecting a substitution level is not the same as multiclassing—you remain with the class for which the substitution level is taken. The class features of the substitution level simply replace those of the standard level.

You can select each substitution level only at a specific class level. When you take a substitution level for your class at a given level, you give up the class features gained at that level for the standard class, and you get the substitution level features instead. You can't go back and gain the class features for the level you swapped out—when you take your next level in the standard class, you gain the next higher level as if you had gained the previous level normally.

SOLSTICE KNIGHT SUBSTITUTION LEVELS

Paladins who spend the winter months in meditation gain access to new abilities.

REQUIREMENTS

To take a solstice knight substitution level, a character must be a paladin about to take her 2nd or 5th level of paladin.

CLASS SKILLS

Solstice knight substitution levels grant the same class skills as the standard paladin class.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Intelligence modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are features of the solstice knight's substitution levels.

Blessed Radiance (Sp): Embraced by the risen sun, a 3rd-level solstice knight carries a light deep within her soul, a radiance she pledges to bear into places of darkness and terror. She gains the ability to create a glorious, swirling aura of light, painting the area around her with a magnificent cascade of silver and gold. As a free action, a solstice knight may cast *daylight*, centered upon herself, a number of times per day equal to her uses of smite evil. (The two effects are not related—they merely have an equal number of uses.) Her caster level equals her paladin level.

Darkvision (Ex): At 5th level the solstice knight also gains darkvision with a range of 30 feet. If she already possesses darkvision she instead increases the range of her darkvision by 30 feet.

Strike of the Faithful (Su): A solstice knight can channel the titanic power of the sun's righteous light. Whenever the paladin uses his smite evil ability against an evil undead creature he deals double the smite damage. The paladin loses one daily use of smite evil from her total number of uses when she gains this ability. Thereafter she has one fewer use per day (only two at 10th level, for example).

SOLSTICE KNIGHT SUBSTITUTION LEVELS

HIT DIE D10

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Aura of courage, blessed radiance
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Darkvision, strike of the faithful, *special mount*

by Richard Farrese

THE ELK KING

RANGER

In ancient days, men believed in a minor deity known as the Elk King. It was said that this god frequently walked upon the mortal world in the guise of a powerful humanoid male with the head of an elk, hunting down nature's enemies and slaying those who would cause it harm. A small group of rangers have taken over this ancient tradition. These men and women put fear in the hearts of those who cut down even a single tree.

HISTORY

Several human tribes throughout the world once worshiped the Elk King. With the advent of civilization and the emergence of large cults and major religions, the power of this ancient god gradually waned. Today, all that remains of him is the memory that such an entity once existed. Before the majority of this knowledge disappeared from the thoughts of mankind, however, a small group of ardent followers of the dead god founded what they called the Fraternity of the Elk King.

GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

At first glance, the Fraternity of the Elk King is little more than a loosely based ranger guild whose members are sworn defenders of nature. There is more to it than the common man suspects, however. Like many guilds, the fraternity provides its members with food, lodging, and gear at reduced cost in several places throughout the world, but it focuses its efforts on maintaining a centuries-old tradition established by the Elk King: the Great Hunt.

The Great Hunt consists of a fraternity member from each guildhall assuming the role of the ancient deity. The leader of each respective guildhall gives his member the *mantle of the Elk King*: a large, dark, and powerful-looking elk head with beady eyes and wide antlers. With this intimidating headdress, the adorned members of the fraternity roam the wild places of the world to rid it of its enemies. Thanks to the Great Hunt, in some regions common folk believe in some sort of vengeful entity that keeps a close watch on nature.

NEW MAGIC ITEM

Designed by and for rangers belonging to the Fraternity of the Elk King, a *mantle of the Elk King* belongs to each guildhall of the fraternity. It is nearly impossible to find this item outside of the organization, as its members zealously guard (and use) the mantle. The secret of the construction of these powerful items was lost with the disappearance of the Elk King, making them extremely rare and essentially priceless.

Mantle of the Elk King: This item looks like a simple, hollowed-out stuffed elk head. When worn by a ranger the mantle merges with its wearer's head. Donning the mantle grants a ranger darkvision out to 120 feet as well as a +4 enhancement bonus to his Strength and Constitution scores. He also benefits from a +8 bonus on all Intimidate skill checks and can, twice per day, summon a pair of dire elk (see page 75 of the *Monster Manual II*) to aid him (as per *summon nature's ally IV*). These elk remain for 18 rounds or until slain. The *mantle of the Elk King* bestows one negative level on any nonranger who dons it. The negative level remains as long as the mantle is worn and disappears when it is removed. This negative level never results in actual level loss, but it cannot be overcome in any way while the mantle is worn.

Strong transmutation; CL 18th; Weight 9 lb.

MEMBERSHIP AND HIERARCHY

Any ranger willing to follow the teachings of the Elk King and able to dedicate at least one week every year to parade as the deity can become a member of the fraternity. Each guildhall of the fraternity is headed by an Elk Prince—a wise and often venerable ranger of either gender who knows the rites and history of the deity by heart. The Elk Prince ensures that one member of each hall always bears the mantle of the ancient deity. No other ranks exist in the fraternity, as all members take on the *mantle of the Elk King* in turn and are otherwise treated equally.

by Joshua Cole

DWARF ROGUES

ROGUE

Stolid dwarf society frowns upon roguery in its usual forms, but dwarves value two things in common with most successful outlaws: wealth and skill. Dwarven engineers, respected masters of their race's grand vaults and vast underground cities, sometimes feel the call of this combination to such an extent that they compromise their honor. Others learn engineering with the intent to destroy rather than create—to collapse tunnel ceilings on invading drow or burrow into the subterranean vaults of ancient foes.

A dwarven engineer learns to mix his mechanical aptitude with unconventional motives, finding ready employ with any adventuring party or thieves' guild he comes across. No one builds better than a dwarf, and no one can ruin better than one either.

Only a member of the appropriate race can take a racial substitution level.

See "Solstice Knight" on page 94 for more information about substitution levels.

DWARF ROGUE SUBSTITUTION LEVELS

A dwarven rogue can choose from new abilities.

REQUIREMENTS

To take a dwarf rogue substitution level, a character must be a dwarf about to take her 1st, 3rd, or 5th level of rogue.

CLASS SKILLS

Rogue substitution levels grant class skills as the base rogue class, plus Knowledge (architecture and engineering).

Skill Points at each Level: 8 + Intelligence modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are features of the dwarf rogue's substitution levels.

Demolitionist (Ex): A 1st-level dwarf rogue deals +1d6 points of damage against constructs and objects. This bonus does not ignore hardness or damage reduction.

Expert Demolitionist (Ex): At 3rd level, the rogue deals +2d6 points of damage against constructs and objects. This bonus does not ignore hardness or damage reduction. In addition, she gains a +2 competence bonus on Craft, Disable Device, or Knowledge (architecture and engineering) checks made to demolish, tunnel through, or otherwise degrade the structural integrity of an object or building—or to plan to do so.

Rapid Demolitionist (Su): A 5th-level the rogue deals +3d6 points of damage against constructs and objects. This bonus does not ignore hardness or damage reduction.

It takes less time for a rogue to use her Craft, Disable Device, or Knowledge (architecture and engineering) checks in order to demolish, tunnel through, or otherwise degrade the structural integrity of an object or building—or to plan to do so. If the task ordinarily takes more than 1 minute to complete, it instead takes half as long. A 1-minute task requires only 5 rounds. Tasks that require a full-round action take only a standard action, and those that begin as a standard action only need a move action. A task that takes a move action or free action does not change.

This substitution replaces the rogue's normal +3d6 points of sneak attack damage at 5th level.

DWARF ROGUE RACIAL SUBSTITUTION LEVELS

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Reflex Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Demolitionist, trapfinding
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	Expert demolitionist, trap sense +1
5th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Rapid demolitionist

by Matthew J. Hanson

UNUSUAL SPELLS

SORCERER

Normally sorcerers take their spells from the sorcerer spell list, but page 54 of the *Player's Handbook* allows for "unusual spells that the sorcerer has gained some understanding of by study."

Allowing sorcerers free access to spells off other spell lists can prove troublesome, but some DMs might allow them a limited number of spells off other lists, provided they put forward effort to learn them. To that end, consider using the following spell lists to help you thematically expand the sorcerer's possibilities. Each spell list expansion presented here has a prerequisite associated with it. A sorcerer must meet the minimum prerequisite of the spell list in order to add one spell (of a level he can already cast) to his sorcerer spell list. He does not automatically learn the spell, but he gains the opportunity to do so. If the sorcerer exceeds the prerequisite in a meaningful and impressive manner the DM might allow him to add the entire spell list expansion to his sorcerer spell list.

CELESTIAL BOON

Angels, archons, and other good outsiders may impart divine knowledge on good-aligned sorcerers who aid the cause of good.

Prerequisites: You must be blessed by a good outsider with at least 5 more Hit Dice than you. The blessing usually is given due to a specific good deed, although it may be rewarded for a history of faithfulness.

Benefit: You add one or more of the following spells to your sorcerer spell list: 0—*purify food and drink;* 1st—*detect evil;* 2nd—*align weapon**; 3rd—*searing light;* 4th—*holy smite;* 5th—*flame strike;* 6th—*undeath to death;* 7th—*holy word;* 8th—*holy aura;* 9th—*storm of vengeance*
*Cast as a good spell only

DWARVEN ANCESTRY

The dwarves' connection to the earth often provides dwarven sorcerers with magic uncommon to surface dwellers.

Prerequisite: Dwarf. You must create a work in stone of unparalleled beauty, recognized by peers for its expert craftsmanship.

Benefit: You add the following spells to your sorcerer spell list: 0—*guidance;* 1st—*shield of faith;* 2nd—*make whole;* 3rd—*magic vestment;* 4th—*spike stones;* 5th—*spell resistance;* 6th—*stone tell;* 7th—*hero's feast;* 8th—*earthquake;* 9th—*elemental swarm**
*Cast as an earth spell only

FIENDISH PACT

Some evil sorcerers pay any price for power, readily making deals with evil outsiders, making unspeakable sacrifices—even selling their very souls—for the power of the lower planes.

Prerequisites: You must make a pact with an evil outsider with at least 5 more Hit Dice than you. Typically the pact involves providing a service for the outsider or offering a valuable sacrifice in exchange for the benefits granted.

Benefit: You add the following spells to your sorcerer spell list: 0—*inflict minor wounds;* 1st—*detect good;* 2nd—*align weapon**; 3rd—*poison;* 4th—*unholy blight;* 5th—*summon swarm;* 6th—*harm;* 7th—*blasphemy;* 8th—*unholy aura;* 9th—*implosion*
*Cast as an evil spell only

ORC DESCENT

An orc sorcerer sometimes learns to harness the rage and bestial nature burning inside him. This grants the sorcerer powers others lack, improving the orc's already fearsome physical power or causing his terrible anger to explode outward.

Prerequisites: Orc or half-orc. You must accomplish some great deed set before you by your tribe's shaman or chieftain that increases your tribe's power.

Benefit: You add the following spells to your sorcerer spell list: 0—*virtue;* 1st—*longstrider;* 2nd—*rage;* 3rd—*good hope;* 4th—*divine power;* 5th—*righteous might;* 6th—*harm;* 7th—*destruction;* 8th—*earthquake;* 9th—*storm of vengeance*

by C. Wesley Clough

GRIMOIRES

WIZARD

The wizard library is an archetypal image in fantasy. Whether filled with towering bookcases carefully arranged by subject or slipshod piles spilling over into living spaces, all wizard libraries have one thing in common: vast numbers of books. What do these tomes and librams contain? Obviously they cannot all be grimiores. Mundane works on subjects pertaining to the wizard's interests and magical studies constitute the majority of books in a wizard's library.

Some works provide such value that wizards from across the multiverse attempt to acquire copies of them and libraries must occasionally guard their copies from theft. The books presented here represent a sample of such popular works. While these books vary in general appearance, each weighs roughly 3 pounds. All of the writing and illustrations inside are hand written and drawn, either by the author (in the case of an original manuscript) or by a scribe who copied the work. None contain spells, but as reference works they provide +2 circumstance bonuses to the listed skills.

DIMENSIONS OF EVIL: A GUIDEBOOK TO THE NETHER REALMS

This tome provides its bonus on checks relating to the Lower Planes. Due to its subject matters several faiths of good deities have banned this book and attempt to confiscate any copies that appear. Others encourage their followers to read the book, going so far as to create multiple copies. *Dimensions of Evil* paints a fairly accurate and unflattering view of the Lower Planes and its inhabitants.

Language: Infernal
Skill: Knowledge (the planes)
Market Price: 75 gp

DWELLINGS OF THE ANCIENTS

This tome provides its bonuses on checks relating to ancient ruins and inscriptions. Considered a definitive treatise on the subject of ancient civilizations and ruins, this book documents how several ancient cultures constructed their buildings and offers translations of several famous inscriptions found therein. The book, written by acclaimed antiquarian Naniel ibn-Nurth, also provides a short section on ancient scripts and languages, which can be quite helpful when attempting to decipher similar writings.

Language: Dwarven
Skills: Knowledge (architecture) and Decipher Script
Market Price: 140 gp

SLAYING DRAGONS

This tome provides its bonus on checks relating to dragons. A hefty tome wrapped in leather created from the skin of a black dragon, *Slaying Dragons* presents impassioned reasons and techniques for hunting some of the most deadly creatures in all creation. It is somewhat ironic, however, that proclaimed dragon hater and the author of this tome, one Cevinar of the Saffron Robes, died a very public death on the claws of a red wyrm some eighty years ago. Despite his untimely demise the wizard was thorough in his research, his surviving work being a testament to that.

Language: Common
Skills: Knowledge (arcana)
Market Price: 100 gp

THE THEORY AND APPLICATION OF FORCE MAGIC

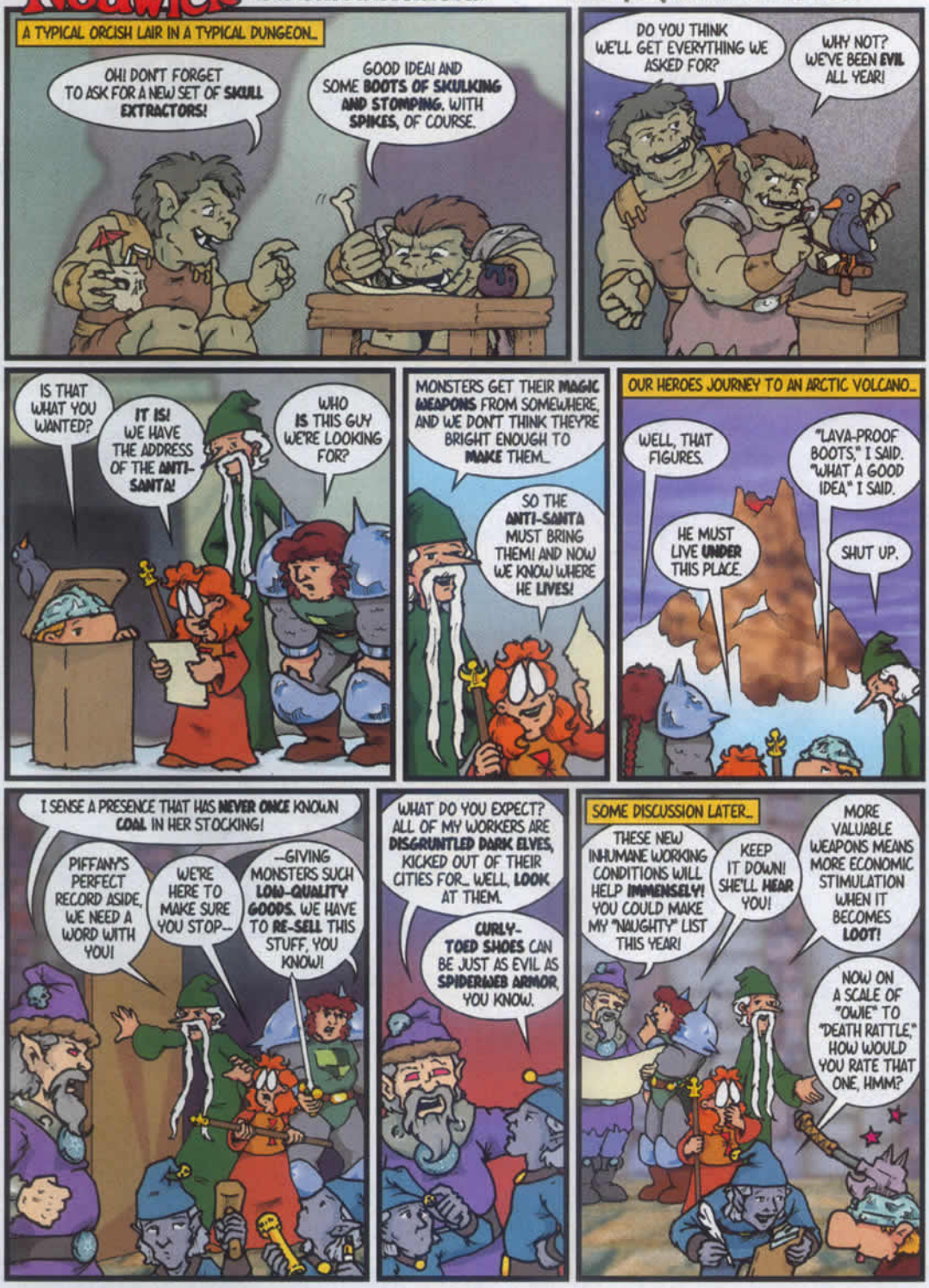
This tome provides its bonuses on checks relating to spells with the force descriptor. Many wizards consider Aeroth Blith's book the best reference about force magic ever written. Well organized and clearly written, if a little dry and analytical in places, the tome examines force magic as a mysterious power akin to a fifth element. Copies of this book can often be found in universities and larger libraries that cater to war wizards and battle mages.

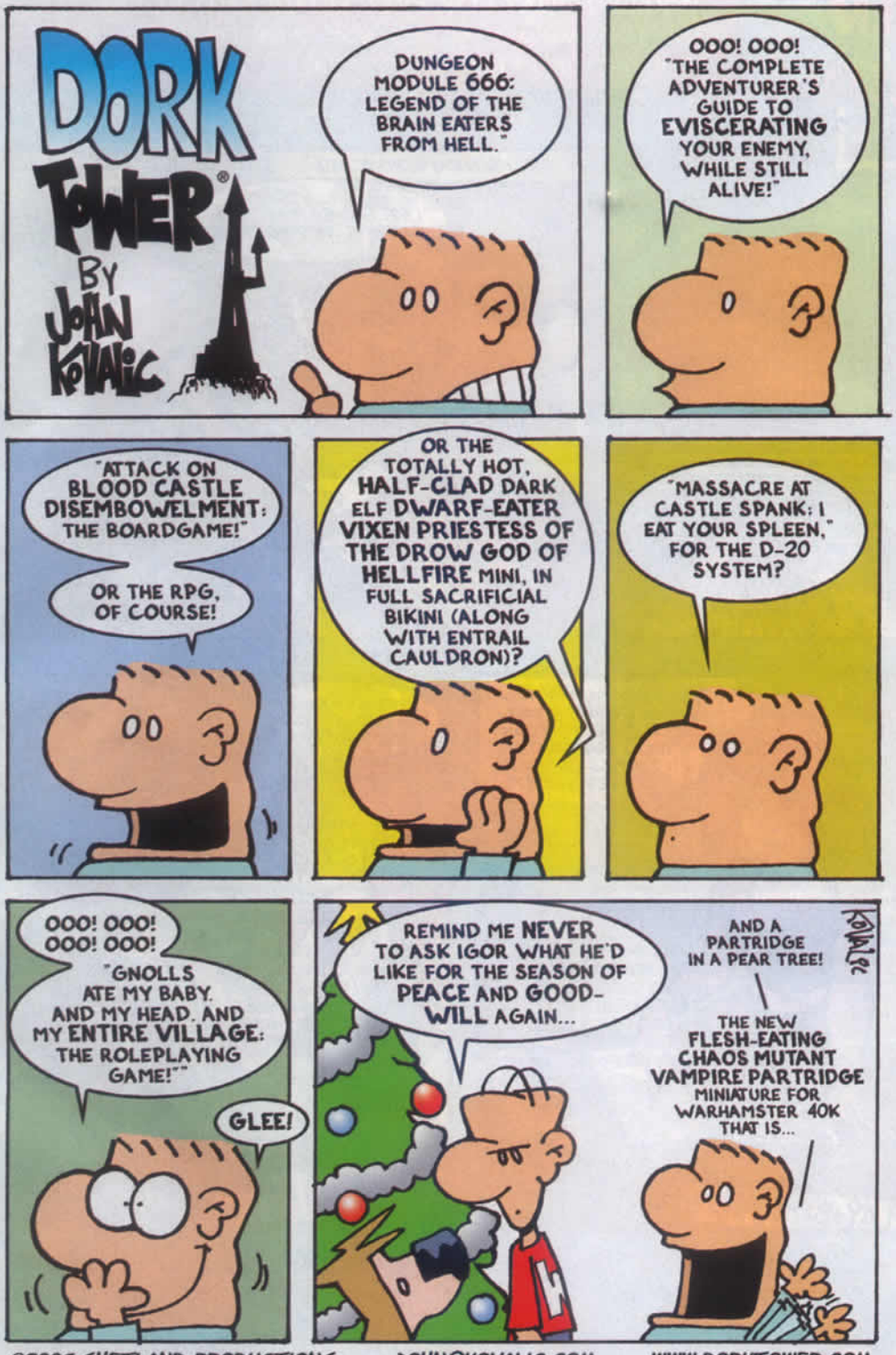
Language: Common
Skills: Knowledge (arcana) and Spellcraft
Market Price: 55 gp

Nodwick

by Aaron Williams
www.nodwick.com

Why is everyone telling me to marry a girl called Christmas?


A TYPICAL ORCISH LAIR IN A TYPICAL DUNGEON...
OH! DON'T FORGET TO ASK FOR A NEW SET OF SKULL EXTRACTORS!
GOOD IDEA! AND SOME BOOTS OF SKULKING AND STOMPING. WITH SPIKES, OF COURSE.
DO YOU THINK WE'LL GET EVERYTHING WE ASKED FOR?
WHY NOT? WE'VE BEEN EVIL ALL YEAR!
IS THAT WHAT YOU WANTED?
IT IS! WE HAVE THE ADDRESS OF THE ANTI-SANTA!
WHO IS THIS GUY WE'RE LOOKING FOR?
MONSTERS GET THEIR MAGIC WEAPONS FROM SOMEWHERE, AND WE DON'T THINK THEY'RE BRIGHT ENOUGH TO MAKE THEM...
SO THE ANTI-SANTA MUST BRING THEM! AND NOW WE KNOW WHERE HE LIVES!
OUR HEROES JOURNEY TO AN ARCTIC VOLCANO...
WELL, THAT FIGURES.
"LAVA-PROOF BOOTS," I SAID. "WHAT A GOOD IDEA," I SAID.
HE MUST LIVE UNDER THIS PLACE.
SHUT UP.
I SENSE A PRESENCE THAT HAS NEVER ONCE KNOWN COAL IN HER STOCKING!
PIFFANY'S PERFECT RECORD ASIDE, WE NEED A WORD WITH YOU!
WE'RE HERE TO MAKE SURE YOU STOP--
--GIVING MONSTERS SUCH LOW-QUALITY GOODS. WE HAVE TO RE-SELL THIS STUFF, YOU KNOW!
WHAT DO YOU EXPECT? ALL OF MY WORKERS ARE DISGRUNTLED DARK ELVES, KICKED OUT OF THEIR CITIES FOR... WELL, LOOK AT THEM.
CURLY-TOED SHOES CAN BE JUST AS EVIL AS SPIDERWEB ARMOR, YOU KNOW.
SOME DISCUSSION LATER...
THESE NEW INHUMANE WORKING CONDITIONS WILL HELP IMMENSELY! YOU COULD MAKE MY "NAUGHTY" LIST THIS YEAR!
KEEP IT DOWN! SHE'LL HEAR YOU!
MORE VALUABLE WEAPONS MEANS MORE ECONOMIC STIMULATION WHEN IT BECOMES LOOT!
NOW ON A SCALE OF "OWIE" TO "DEATH RATTLE," HOW WOULD YOU RATE THAT ONE, HMM?


DORK TOWER®
BY JOHN KOVALIC
DUNGEON MODULE 666: LEGEND OF THE BRAIN EATERS FROM HELL."
OOO! OOO! "THE COMPLETE ADVENTURER'S GUIDE TO EVISCERATING YOUR ENEMY, WHILE STILL ALIVE!"
"ATTACK ON BLOOD CASTLE DISEMBOWELMENT: THE BOARDGAME!"
OR THE RPG, OF COURSE!
OR THE TOTALLY HOT, HALF-CLAD DARK ELF DWARF-EATER VIXEN PRIESTESS OF THE DROW GOD OF HELLFIRE MINI, IN FULL SACRIFICIAL BIKINI (ALONG WITH ENTRAIL CAULDRON)?
"MASSACRE AT CASTLE SPANK: I EAT YOUR SPLEEN," FOR THE D-20 SYSTEM?
OOO! OOO! OOO! OOO! "GNOLLS ATE MY BABY. AND MY HEAD. AND MY ENTIRE VILLAGE: THE ROLEPLAYING GAME!"
GLEE!
REMIND ME NEVER TO ASK IGOR WHAT HE'D LIKE FOR THE SEASON OF PEACE AND GOOD-WILL AGAIN...
AND A PARTRIDGE IN A PEAR TREE!
THE NEW FLESH-EATING CHAOS MUTANT VAMPIRE PARTRIDGE MINIATURE FOR WARHAMSTER 40K THAT IS...
KOVALIC

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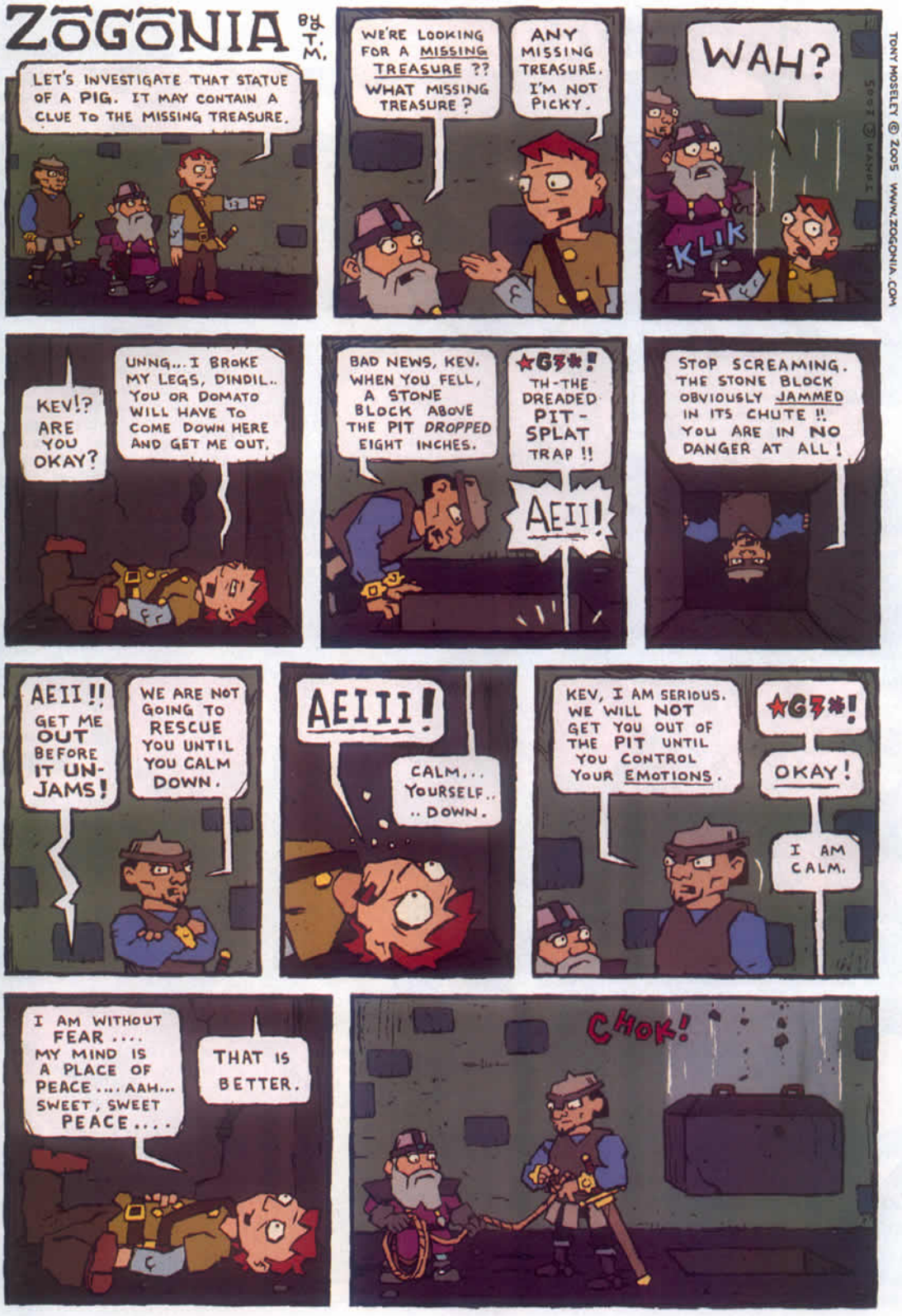
ZOGONIA
BY T. M.
LET'S INVESTIGATE THAT STATUE OF A PIG. IT MAY CONTAIN A CLUE TO THE MISSING TREASURE.
WE'RE LOOKING FOR A MISSING TREASURE ?? WHAT MISSING TREASURE ?
ANY MISSING TREASURE. I'M NOT PICKY.
WAH?
KLIK
TONY MOSELEY © 2005 WWW.ZOGONIA.COM
KEV!? ARE YOU OKAY?
UNNG... I BROKE MY LEGS, DINDIL.. YOU OR DOMATO WILL HAVE TO COME DOWN HERE AND GET ME OUT.
BAD NEWS, KEV. WHEN YOU FELL, A STONE BLOCK ABOVE THE PIT DROPPED EIGHT INCHES.
★G3*! TH-THE DREADED PIT-SPLAT TRAP !!
AEII!
STOP SCREAMING. THE STONE BLOCK OBVIOUSLY JAMMED IN ITS CHUTE !! YOU ARE IN NO DANGER AT ALL !
AEII !! GET ME OUT BEFORE IT UN-JAMS!
WE ARE NOT GOING TO RESCUE YOU UNTIL YOU CALM DOWN.
AEIII!
CALM... YOURSELF.. .. DOWN.
KEV, I AM SERIOUS. WE WILL NOT GET YOU OUT OF THE PIT UNTIL YOU CONTROL YOUR EMOTIONS.
★G3*!
OKAY!
I AM CALM.
I AM WITHOUT FEAR .... MY MIND IS A PLACE OF PEACE .... AAH... SWEET, SWEET PEACE ....
THAT IS BETTER.
CHOK!

The Order of the Stick™

by Rich Burlew

Ahhh! It's got me!
Stab tha creature, Roy!
Umm... I'm not sure I can.
I'm pretty sure I can only attack while grappled if I have a light weapon.
I could be wrong. I'm a little unclear on how it all works.
Are ye sure?
Hey, how about natural weapons?
Gee, Elan, well I considered spontaneously growing horns, but decided it was just an inefficient use of my action.
Really??
No.
Look, not that I'm in a rush or anything, but can anyone remember the rules on attacking while grappled?
Don't look at me, I never bother with that special attack crap!
Psssst! You can't say "crap" in Dragon Magazine.
I believe I have the answer. No, you may not strike a foe with which you are grappling unless your blade is considered "light".
Fantastic.
But all is well. The aberration shall be denied its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class for as long as Sir Greenhilt remains grappled.
Sneak Attack, ahoy!
Hold on, I thought I don't lose my Dex bonus because I have Improved Grab. Right?
No, no, no, that just lets you start the grapple for free when you hit someone.
Ugh, this is just—Look, can we forget the grapple thing? OK? I'll just full attack or something. Geez.
Fine, but don't get snippy, it was your idea.
SLASH!
SLASH!
GAHH!
Thor's Beard! Roy's done dropp'd to negatives!
I think it's clear now that the only way we can beat this beast—
—is with a Bull Rush!
Are you sure you don't mean an Overrun?
Wait, I forget, which one pushes the enemy back?
If you need me, I'll be reading up on Coup de Grace.

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